

DREAM, FANTASY,
AND
VISUAL ART
IN
ROMAN ELEGY



EMMA SCIOLI

VISIT...

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*Dream, Fantasy, and Visual Art
in Roman Elegy*

Publication of this volume has been made possible, in part,
through the generous support and enduring vision of
Warren G. Moon

and through support from
the Vice Chancellor for Research Book Publication Award,
sponsored by the Hall Center for the Humanities at the
University of Kansas.

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The University of Wisconsin Press

The University of Wisconsin Press
1930 Monroe Street, 3rd Floor
Madison, Wisconsin 53711-2059
uwpress.wisc.edu

3 Henrietta Street, Covent Garden
London WC2E 8LU, United Kingdom
eurospanbookstore.com

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Printed in the United States of America

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Scioli, Emma, 1971–, author.

Dream, fantasy, and visual art in Roman elegy / Emma Scioli.

pages cm — (Wisconsin studies in classics)

ISBN 978-0-299-30384-6 (pbk.: alk. paper)

ISBN 978-0-299-30383-9 (e-book)

1. Elegiac poetry, Latin—History and criticism. 2. Dreams in literature.

I. Title. II. Series: Wisconsin studies in classics.

PA6059.E6S37 2015

874'.0109—dc23

2014036986

For
Celeste and Nico,
little dreamers

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Acknowledgments

Like Morpheus, Ovid's shape-shifting bringer of dreams, this book about dreams has assumed several forms since its inception. In content this book bears only a pale resemblance to my UCLA dissertation on the representation of dreams, sleepers, and sleep in Roman poetry and visual art, but its essence will be familiar to those who knew that project well. I thank my dissertation committee, especially my chair, Sander M. Goldberg, and Susan B. Downey, for their support, guidance, and criticism of my ideas. It was in Susan's art history seminar on narrative in Roman art that I first became interested in how we, as viewers, might imagine the absent dreams of the painted and sculpted sleepers of ancient Rome. This book's exploration of the conflict between the desire to share our dreams with others and the impossibility of replicating the isolated experience of dreaming, which has perhaps its most succinct expression in the mute sleepers of visual art, can trace its origins to my research for that class. In Trevor Fear's seminar on elegiac poetry I first encountered the dreams treated in this book and began to see a way in which the first-person dream narratives of Roman elegy might shed light upon the conflict between internal experience and external expression. Many re-readings and re-viewings have occurred since those early days.

As with any project that has occupied a quarter of a life and moved across countries and oceans on its journey, there are numerous people to thank for improving the work and making the experience of creating it more enjoyable. While working on my dissertation as a Fellow at the American Academy in Rome, a dreamland in its own right, my time and ideas were enriched by the friendship of Catherine Chin, Mary Doyno, Elizabeth Marlowe, Kristina Milnor, Richard Neer, David Petrain, Jonah Siegel, Nancy Yousef, Sergio Casali, and Fabio Stok. After I exchanged the she-wolf for the Jayhawk nearly ten years ago, the encouragement and friendship of my colleagues in the Department of Classics at the University of Kansas were vital as I completed this book. In particular, Anthony Corbeill and Tara Welch read several chapters, some more than twice, offering keen criticism and much-appreciated nudges toward greater clarity and more rigorous engagement with certain ideas. Support from the KU General Research Fund and a faculty fellowship at the Hall Center for the Humanities at KU gave me crucial time and

Acknowledgments

resources for writing. Research assistance from Anne Leon, Rachel Geer, Lauren Callahan, and David Welch helped at different stages of the project.

I am grateful to audiences at the 2010 meeting of the Classical Association of the Middlewest and South, Johannes Gutenberg University in Mainz, the Hall Center for the Humanities at KU, and the Department of Classics and Religious Studies at the University of Nebraska for valuable feedback on my ideas as they took shape. Christine Walde has been a generous mentor, close friend, and treasured comrade in the study of dreams. I thank Jessica Brent, Basil Dufallo, Peter Holliday, Vered Lev Kenaan, Jean Sorabella, and Hérica Valladares for reading and offering comments on drafts of several chapters. The anonymous readers for the University of Wisconsin Press helped me in particular with defining the scope of the project, beyond offering suggestions for specific revisions. I must acknowledge William Aylward, former co-editor of the Wisconsin Studies in Classics series, for giving my manuscript serious attention at a critical moment. The staff at the Press has been a pleasure to work with, especially Raphael Kadushin, Matthew Cosby, and Amber Rose. Thanks, too, to Brian Curran, editor of *MAAR*, for granting permission to reprint a slightly revised version of my article “The Visual Dreamscape of Propertius 3.3,” *MAAR* 56/57 (2011–12): 137–75, which appears here as chapter 4.

Over the years, especially during the summers, the assistance of several women who helped care for my children has afforded me both time to write and peace of mind. My deepest personal gratitude goes to the two people who have almost as large an emotional investment in this book as I do (and, for this reason, are probably as much relieved as happy to see it done): my mother, Susan Scioli, whose kindness and support came in countless forms; and my husband, Philip Stinson, whose love and patience sustain me. Without them the ideas for this book would have remained merely *somnia vana*.

*Dream, Fantasy, and Visual Art
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Introduction

Dreams and Dreamers

Despite numerous studies on the visual sensibility of the Roman elegists and the perpetual interest in the distinctive dreams of the elegiac corpus, no work has sought to unite these two elements in a comprehensive study. At its core, this book seeks to bring these features into closer alignment by considering the dreams of elegy with special attention to their visual qualities. In it, I analyze select dreams and related phenomena such as fantasies and visions in the elegiac poetry of Tibullus, Propertius, and Ovid, the principal authors of elegiac poetry during its short but explosive flourishing in Augustan Rome. In particular, I explore the ways in which these poets negotiated the challenges of representing the visual experience of dreaming in textual descriptions of that experience. Acknowledging the parallels between dreaming and seeing, and thus between dream and image, I tease out the many implications suggested by these points of comparison. What I hope will emerge from the close readings offered in the following chapters is a new appraisal of the poetic techniques used by Tibullus, Propertius, and Ovid to describe dreams, fantasies, and visions. I introduce my approach with a brief analysis of a striking couplet from one of Propertius's elegies.

Responding to his lover's violent actions in elegy 3.8, Propertius cites various irrational behaviors that reveal a girl's disguised passion and claims that he has the power to interpret these:

quae mulier rabida iactat convicia lingua,
haec Veneris magnae volvitur ante pedes.
custodum grege seu circa se stipat euntem,
seu sequitur medias, Maenas ut icta, vias,
seu timidam crebro dementia somnia terrent,

15

seu miseram in tabula picta puella movet,
 his ego tormentis animi sum verus haruspex,
 has didici certo saepe in amore notas.
 non est certa fides, quam non in iurgia veritas:
 hostibus eveniat lenta puella meis.¹

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[The same woman who hurls insults with a vicious tongue abases herself at the feet of powerful Venus. Whether she surrounds herself with an entourage when she goes out or goes down the middle of the street like a frenzied maenad, whether disturbing dreams frequently frighten her, or the painted image of another girl makes her miserable, I am the qualified interpreter of this kind of mental anguish; I've learned that these are often the signs of true love. Her devotion is insincere if you don't get into fights: may all my enemies have easygoing girlfriends!]

The couplets in lines 13–14 and 15–16 present two pairs of examples of the mad behaviors of a girl tormented by love.² Within each couplet, the poet offers two types of related but not identical behavior.³ In lines 13–14, whether the girl in question desires to be disguised and protected by an entourage when she goes out or she moves freely (and presumably alone) down the street in a frenzied state, her curious public behavior is motivated by the same factor: love. Although both lines contain images of a girl on the move, they offer a clear distinction between different types of outing. Thus the emphasis of this first couplet is on different types of related behavior motivated by the same cause. In the couplet that follows, the expected distinction is blurred by the nearly identical structure of the lines.

In lines 15–16 we learn that disturbing (lit. “mad”) dreams terrify the girl (line 15), while the painted representation of a female figure is enough to distress her (line 16). By contrast with the preceding couplet, the balanced composition of these lines suggests a close connection between their content. Both lines begin with the correlative *seu* followed by an object, an adverb or adverbial phrase, an adjective, a noun, and an active verb. Each line describes the entity that has the power either to frighten or distress a girl in love, and each agent is modified by an adjective (*dementia*, *picta*), whose connection is emphasized by their parallel placement directly after the metrical caesura and before the nouns they modify in their respective lines. Propertius offers no information about the content of either the dreams or the painting, for specifics would only serve to diminish the universality that the poet claims for this type of behavior.⁴ Rather, he emphasizes the connection between the responses to these incidents because it is their comparable effect on love-struck girls that is relevant for his poem.

In the absence of any information about the content of the dream or the subject of the painting, is an additional comparison between the two entities suggested by the constructed parallelism of lines 15 and 16? My attempt to answer this question reveals the investigative crux of this book. I propose that by emphasizing a girl's similar reaction to dream and painting, Propertius forges an implicit link between dream and painting themselves, and specifically their capacity to stimulate extreme behavior through visual means. Within this couplet, then, Propertius seems to imply that one manifestation of the madness of a girl in love is a violent response to images she has seen, one internal and the other external. In so doing, the poet links the otherwise disparate acts of dreaming and looking at a painting, and thus equates the dreamer with the viewer of a work of visual art. Specifically, this couplet draws attention to a fundamental similarity between disturbing dream and painted girl: each is a visual image that is abstracted from reality through some kind of representation, whether in the dreamer's mind or on a painted surface. Thus the similarity between responses draws attention not to the content of the images themselves, but to their mode of expression as representations of visible reality. An investigation of the relationship between reality and representation, as it is encompassed both by dreams and by works of visual art, and the responses of both dreamers and viewers to this complex relationship, forms the core of this book.

Dreaming and Seeing

As we know from a wealth of epigraphic evidence from Greece and Rome, it was common practice to create a dedicatory inscription in honor of a god who imparted information to a person via a dream or other divinatory medium.⁵ The phrases *κατ' ὄναρ* and *κατ' ὄνειρον* ("from/according to a dream") appear with great regularity on Greek dedicatory inscriptions to specify the reason for the dedication. Latin inscriptions of the same nature and found in the same contexts very often contain the seemingly parallel phrase *ex viso/visu* ("as the result of something having been seen" or "from a vision"), to refer to the incident that inspired their dedication. Although the extant inscriptions boast ways of referring specifically to a dream, such as *somnio monitus*, the phrase *ex viso/visu* is most common. Because of its parallel with the Greek *κατ' ὄναρ* and the lack of additional explanatory material, we can assume that the phrase *ex viso/visu* refers to a dream rather than a waking vision, although this too is a possibility.

The content of the dream is included on only a small portion of the extant inscriptions, and these provide special insight into the type of dream considered worthy of dedication. Most of the time, however, the phrase *ex viso* alone was

sufficient to communicate to the inscription's reader the importance of the information imparted to the person making the dedication. *Ex viso* is used as a kind of shorthand indicator for a more detailed experience whose content we will never know, but this phrase alone conveys valuable information about the Roman conception of dreams as it highlights the dreamer's perception of the dream specifically as a vision. This epigraphic convention offers one type of linguistic evidence for a basic cultural association between dreaming and seeing, which I believe extends to the fictional accounts of a wide variety of dream types that we will encounter in the rest of this book.

William Harris has shown that accounts of what he terms "epiphanies" predominated over other types of dream descriptions in antiquity, both in literature and in nonliterary accounts of dreams.⁶ Generally speaking, epiphanies were dreams in which an "authority figure," usually a god or the shade of a dead person, appeared to a dreamer and imparted a message. Thus the important components of this type of dream are the appearance of a visitor and the message imparted to the dreamer by the visitor. Greek and Roman literature provides us with several examples of this type of dream. Of these, the first dream of Homer's *Iliad*, in which Dream (the personified *Ὀνείριος*) appears to Agamemnon in the guise of Nestor with a message to deceive his men (*Il.* 2.16–34), is an epiphany/message dream. In Latin literature, Vergil's *Aeneid* offers us several prime examples of epiphany/message dreams. Perhaps the most memorable of these is the visit of the ghost of Hector to the sleeping Aeneas in book 2, where Vergil describes the appearance of Hector in the dream as follows: "in somnis, ecce, ante oculos maestissimus Hector / visus adesse mihi largosque effundere fletus" ("in my dreams, look, most sorrowful Hector seemed (*visus*) to stand right before my eyes and to weep plentiful tears," lines 270–71).⁷ The participle *visus* echoes the phrase *ex viso* so frequent in the dedicatory inscriptions, and thus provides a link between our sources for real and fictional references to the dream as a type of "appearance." In his commentary on this passage, Nicholas Horsfall has called the grammatical construction of line 271 (the passive participle of *videre* [*visus*, here standing for the finite verb *visus est*] plus an infinitive verb) the "standard idiom" for dream descriptions in epic.⁸ Translating the phrase "visus adesse mihi" as "I dreamed appeared to me," Horsfall substitutes the standard English idiom "I dreamed" for the Latin one. I choose not to translate the passive of *videre* with the English verb "to dream" throughout this book, for this rendering elides the connotations of vision in the Latin verb. Although the infinitive *adesse* may suggest Hector's (sudden) appearance and presence, and the phrase *ante oculos* reinforces the visual nature of Aeneas's dream, I elect to use the English words "seemed" (as above) and

In what is perhaps the best-known dream poem in Roman elegy, Propertius 4.7, the poet appropriates the paradigm of the epiphany/message dream from epic and gives it a particularly elegiac spin. Full of accusations of mistreatment, the ghost of Cynthia, the narrator's deceased lover, is able to reproach and torment him from beyond the grave. The poem begins:

sunt aliquid Manes: letum non omnia finit,
luridaque evictos effugit umbra rogos.
Cynthia namque meo visa est incumbere fulcro,
murmur ad extremae nuper humata viae . . .

[So ghosts do exist: death is not the end of all, and a pale shade escapes from the conquered pyre. For Cynthia appeared to hover over my bed, Cynthia who had recently been buried near the din of the road's edge . . . (lines 1-4)]

The vocabulary and structure of the poet's description is typical for the epiphany/message dream. The dreamer describes the sudden appearance of the messenger. Like Hector in Aeneas's dream, Cynthia also appears to (seems to) hover over the narrator's bed as she appears (is visible) in his dream. Propertius uses the standard idiom for epiphany/message dreams in line 3: *visa est incumbere*, where the verb *visa est* ("appeared") reinforces the notion of her sudden presence and visibility suggested by *incumbere* ("to hover"). Cynthia's appearance to the sleeping Propertius closely resembles that of the shade of Patroclus who visits the sleeping Achilles in *Iliad* 23.62–98, especially in the poet's reference to the ghost's look as familiar from life but yet incongruous among the living.⁹ As is the case with Patroclus's ghost in *Iliad* 23 and Aeneas's dream of Hector, Cynthia imparts an important message to the dreamer, berating Propertius for not showing the proper respect to her body in death and instructing him, among other things, to burn his poetry to her and inscribe on her tomb an epitaph dictated by her. Like the ghost of Patroclus, too, Cynthia's ghost eludes the grasp of the dreamer on her departure ("inter complexus excidit umbra meos," line 96), thus confirming her status as an insubstantial yet patently visible being.¹⁰

Whether real or fictional, epiphany/message dreams were generally valued for the message imparted by the visitor to the dreamer, and for the action spurred by the message's content. But it is important to stress that these dreams were experienced primarily as visions. As Harris argues, describing a dream as a vision lent it

authority by suggesting its external origin and the dreamer's status as its recipient rather than its inventor.¹¹ The *ex viso* inscriptions leave us with little information beyond the basic fact that a vision inspired the dedications, however. But if we look closely at their counterparts in the literary accounts of epiphany/message dreams, we can begin to identify what qualifies the dream as a visual experience beyond the fact that it "was seen." While the message may be what the dreamer retains after he has awoken, the appearance of the messenger in both senses of the word—his or her presence before the dreamer and (frequently) the way he or she looks to the dreamer—often features in accounts of these dreams in works of literature, and thus is important to their narration to a listener or reader.

Let us return to Aeneas's vision of Hector in *Aeneid* 2.270–79. The participle *visus*, which establishes the ghost as something seen and not simply heard, as discussed above, is supported by the interjection *ecce* and the prepositional phrase *ante oculos*, both of which confirm the sleeper's visual engagement with the messenger. Furthermore, Aeneas dwells upon Hector's appearance in detail. In addition to being very sorrowful (*maestissimus*) and weeping (*effundere fletus*), Aeneas comments in lines 272–76 that Hector appeared mutilated, as he did at his death, a shocking change from his typical form, and thus unfamiliar to Aeneas:

raptatus bigis, ut quondam, aterque cruento
pulvere perque pedes traiectus lora tumentis.
ei mihi, qualis erat! quantum mutatus ab illo
Hectore qui redit exuvias indutus Achilli
vel Danaum Phrygios iaculatus puppibus ignis!

275

[Dragged by the chariot, as he once was, black with bloody dust and pierced through his swollen feet with a leather strap. Ah, how he looked! How greatly changed from that Hector who returned dressed in the spoils of Achilles or who hurled Trojan flames at the Greek ships.]

As we see from these lines, the image of Hector visiting his dream inspires Aeneas to conjure yet another image of Hector ("illo Hectore," lines 274–75), that of the triumphant victor over Patroclus, the hero setting fire to the Greek ships. The vision of Hector is thus doubled, with reality and memory, present and past, juxtaposed as though part of a diptych, and thus doubly powerful as a visual image.

In the passage from Propertius 4.7 discussed above, Cynthia appeared (*visa est*) to hover over the dreamer's bed (*incumbere*), a feat made more impressive by the dreamer's revelation that she was recently buried (*humata*). The dream's appearance is not merely sudden; rather, it clashes directly with the dreamer's waking reality:

Cynthia's physical body, which was recently placed below the earth, now appears as a ghost inclining weightlessly above it. Thus we see that the verb *visa est* does double duty. It refers both to the appearance of the ghost in Propertius's bedroom and to the ghost's apparent ability to hover in defiance of what the dreamer knows to be true: that the ghost emanates from a body that has recently been buried and thus trapped under the earth. Her incongruity among the living is underscored by the poet's graphic and detailed description of Cynthia's physical appearance in lines 7–12.¹² As these examples demonstrate, the descriptions of appearance that accompany these fictional epiphany/message dreams, by characterizing the dreams as visual experiences, give a kind of substance to the weight of their message. In so doing, these descriptions also draw attention to the dreamer's perceptual experience of the dream.

Particulars of context aside, the epiphany/message dreams of ancient literature are remarkably consistent in their vocabulary and structure, and thus as a type they provide a model against which other types of dreams can be compared.¹³ This book is concerned with a class of dreams that we tend to think of as more modern: those that a dreamer might recall as a series of events rather than as the sudden vision of a message-bearer. These "episode" dreams, to borrow Harris's term,¹⁴ by contrast with epiphany/message dreams, can take many forms—they might be symbolic or have elements of the surreal; they might contain figures familiar or unknown to the dreamer; they might be terrifying or pleasurable—but they are generally characterized by features other than the sudden appearance of a messenger bearing an urgent message for the dreamer. One focus of my inquiry will be to see where and how the episode dreams of Roman elegy respond to and deviate from the paradigm of the epiphany/message dream.

Perhaps the major distinction between epiphany/message dreams and episode dreams is the manner in which the dream's information is conveyed to the dreamer. One way to delineate between the two types of dream would be to characterize the epiphany/message dream as "external" whereas the episode dream is "internal" to the dreamer. The former is a visitation by a deceased or divine figure, and thus the dream is "shared" by both visitor and dreamer; the latter is a set of visions internal to the dreamer, and, although there may be additional figures populating the dream, it is experienced exclusively by the dreamer. I am not making a distinction between epiphany/message and episode dreams in terms of their value to the dreamer, or in terms of their possible interpretation as messages from the gods and prophetic in nature.¹⁵ Rather, I mean to draw attention to an obvious distinction between the ways in which these types of dreams are described by their dreamers. Whereas epiphany/message dreams, whether alluded to in inscriptions or described by historians or poets, provide us with a very recognizable type of interaction,

there is a more complex relationship between dreamer and episode dream. The visual character of episode dreams varies greatly and is a specific reflection upon how the dreamer chooses to present the content of the dream to his or her audience. Furthermore, the dreamer's awareness of the possible symbolism of episode dreams demands an extra level of intervention that epiphany/message dreams do not require of their dreamers.

The preceding discussion of epiphany/message dreams provides a baseline for the exploration and discussion of the more complex visual quality of their counterparts in the episode dream. Although less common, the episode dreams of ancient literature are especially important for what they reveal about the experience of the Roman notion of "seeing" a dream. The episode dreams contained in the corpus of Roman elegiac poetry, in particular, are diverse in type, length, and complexity, and thus offer a rich source for the study of this class of dream. Isolating the episode dream from its counterpart allows us to consider it in alignment with other descriptive modes such as ekphrasis and simile, and with other modes of visualization such as fantasy and hallucination.

Interest in the dreams of ancient literature has generated a number of genre-specific studies. Of the major genres, epic poetry has garnered the most attention in the scholarship on dreams.¹⁶ Despite the fact that Roman elegiac poetry contains dreams equally as memorable, complex, and diverse as their counterparts in epic poetry, there has never been a book-length treatment of the dreams in Roman elegy. A central goal of this book is to fill this gap in scholarship. Rather than attempt to be comprehensive in scope, I present close readings of select dreams and related phenomena from the corpus of Roman elegy, establishing thematic unity through a focus on specific facets of each of the selected dreams. Focusing on dreams relayed through first-person narration, I trace a chronological path through the elegiac corpus. My approach is both diachronic, in that it suggests the influence of earlier poems upon later ones, and synchronic, in that it creates along the way a conversation among the passages that highlights both their common features and their divergences.

Christine Walde's *Die Traumdarstellungen in der griechisch-römischen Dichtung* (2001) was a watershed for the analysis of dreams in literature. In her study, Walde formulates a typology of dreams in Greek and Roman poetry, creating subcategories that allow us to comprehend specifically the narratological function of dreams in works of literature from diverse time periods, genres, and languages. Walde's contribution to the study of dreams has been of singular importance because it provides critics with a tool for reading across texts, languages, and genres through the lens of a single device, the dream. By the nature of its sweeping approach, Walde's work eschews very close readings of individual dream passages within their respective

contexts, preferring instead to draw comparisons between her chosen dream passages at the level of theme and language. The multiple dreams of elegy make up a portion of Walde's book, but her configuration of the material thwarts comparison among them to some extent, as her book moves chronologically by author, rather than by genre. Thus the three self-contained dream poems of Propertius appear in one section, while the dreams of Ovid's elegiac poems are treated in a section devoted to Ovid. Furthermore, this arrangement leaves little room for comparison between the dreams and other aspects of a given author's work.

Approaches to the dreams of Roman elegy have varied. An article by Jean Bouquet, for example, treats the dream poems of the elegists within a larger discussion of the role of night in elegiac poetry, what he calls "l'intuition du nocturne."¹⁷ Dreams are but one feature of the erotic landscape of the night: lovers' trysts are possible under the cover of shadows, but, as exemplified by the *paraclausithyron*, night also forces the unwilling separation of lovers. Given this special feature of love elegy, Bouquet's analysis demonstrates how the elegists adapt traditional (epic) manifestations of night, sleep, and dreams to reflect the erotic concerns of elegy. There are numerous studies devoted to individual dream poems from the elegiac corpus. In recent years, all three of the self-contained dream poems of Propertius have been the focus of book chapters or articles that mine the dream poems for diverse information. In her work on references to color in the poetry of Catullus, Propertius, and Horace, Jacqueline Clarke examines the connection between color words and programmatic statements in poem 3.3.¹⁸ Basil Dufallo treats poem 4.7 in the context of his larger discussion of the rhetorical practice of summoning the dead to speak in Latin literature and oratory. In this endeavor, Dufallo links poem 4.7 to poem 4.11, in which the ghost of Cornelia, like Cynthia in the earlier poem, speaks from beyond the grave, albeit not in a dream.¹⁹ Most recently, Barbara Flaschenriem has analyzed the nightmare of poem 2.26a as an example of how Propertius attempts to commemorate, and hence control, the image of Cynthia in his work.²⁰

My approach to the study of dreams in poetry is indebted to Walde's model of using dream narratives as a way to forge connections among the works of different authors. One way in which my work differs, however, is in its extension beyond dreams to identify parallels for the experience of dreaming among other poems of the elegists. In particular, I am interested in the ways in which dream descriptions are similar to other modes of description. In this sense, then, while I am broadly interested in understanding the role of dreams in elegy, I am specifically interested in understanding the role of dream narrations in elegy. Another way to cast this distinction would be to say that rather than attempting to recover the experience of dreaming through dream narrations, I am interested in accepting them as

narrations, and instead of focusing on the dreamer solely as dreamer, I focus on the dreamer as narrator. This moves the discussion away from dream interpretation, which focuses on the afterlife of dreams through decoding their symbolic meaning, toward a study of dreams as narratives, or as tools used by narrators as a mode of description and communication.

It is important to state at the outset that this is a book about both elegiac poetry and dreams in literature, and as such it strives to give equal consideration to the critical and methodological concerns of both areas of inquiry. While my study of dreams reveals specific insights about the particular subjectivity of elegiac poetry, I hope that the observations shared here also yield new modes of thinking about ancient attitudes toward dreams. Inspired in equal parts by scholarship on dreams in literature, on Roman elegy, and on the visual culture of the Roman world, this study pursues two main goals that work in tandem. On the one hand, it seeks to unite and advance these areas of scholarship as it articulates and develops a method for understanding dream narratives as attempts to re-create for readers experiences that are primarily visual in nature. On the other hand, it uses observations on the interrelationships among the episodes treated to craft an analysis specific to the first-person narrative thrust of elegiac poetry.

Dreams and Visual Art

Propertius is often cited as the most “visual” of the elegists, followed by Ovid and trailed by Tibullus in a distant third place.²¹ A poet’s “visual” style can be loosely defined as his ability to evoke works of visual art through imagery and subject matter familiar from painting or sculpture, and through language that suggests the creation of visual art, such as color words. The opening lines of poem 1.3, in which the narrator describes three female characters from Greek mythology in an elaborate simile for the appearance of Cynthia asleep, provide a classic example of Propertius’s visual style. The mythological exempla not only evoke in the reader’s imagination an image of what Cynthia might have looked like, but they do this by recalling the compositions of works of visual art with which the Roman reader would have been familiar, and thus bring to mind specific viewing dynamics associated with those representations.²² In the epilogue to her monograph on Propertius, Margaret Hubbard discusses the visual sensibility of the elegist, claiming that Propertius’s imagination is the most consistent feature of his poetic style.²³ Turning to poems 2.26a and 3.3, she suggests that his “vividly pictorial” imagination is best illustrated by these dream poems, demonstrating that the images of these poems have striking parallels in works of visual art whose compositions would have been familiar to and possibly influential on the poet.²⁴

But nowhere does Hubbard offer any sustained analysis of the similarity between dream image and visual image beyond the possible correlation between the imagery of Propertius's dream poems and the subject matter of extant works of visual art. Thus with her brief analysis Hubbard sets the stage for future scholars to investigate Propertius's visual sensibility with particular regard to the dream poems.

Hubbard's ideas recall those of Jean-Paul Boucher, whose work on Propertius's "temperament visuel" is seminal for connecting the multiple visual stimuli of the poet's Rome with the manifestation of visual imagery in his poems.²⁵ Specifically, Boucher suggests that the visual elements in Propertius's elegies are in dialogue with one another, and that, despite a lack of ordering principles among the elegies themselves, the visual imagery creates an order of sensibility rather than of logic. The images of the poems correspond with one another either through similarities or through differences. For Boucher, it is the structure of associations between images, which is connected to the reader's liberation of his or her imagination, that is key to understanding Propertian visual sensibility. In closing his discussion of Propertius's visual style, Boucher briefly mentions the dream poems as loci for the display of the poet's visual sensibility.²⁶

Boucher and Hubbard are primarily interested in visual art as a point of reference for Propertius's visual sensibility. By contrast, Eleanor Winsor Leach's *The Rhetoric of Space* (1988) is the first comprehensive study of the visual sensibility of the Augustan age that gives equal attention to poetry and visual art. Expanding the discussion beyond Propertius to include several poets of his era, Leach's work illuminates the cultural and political factors that influenced the "rhetoric" of the depiction of landscape in poetry and painting during a period in which landscape imagery flourished in both types of representation. Furthermore, her insights have established a mode for understanding the visual quality of the imagery found in the Augustan poets that was specifically connected to the aesthetic principles of visual art contemporary with their work.²⁷

As Leach states at the outset of her study, we should think of art and literature "as participants in a cultural dialectic" that "illuminate each other by intensifying our awareness of their processes of communication."²⁸ Much of Leach's inquiry is informed by her interest in the "pictorialism" of the description of landscape in text, especially as it reflects the function of topographical description in Roman rhetorical theory. She is particularly interested in establishing how a description of landscape creates *enargeia*, or "vividness," defined by the first-century CE teacher of rhetoric Quintilian as the ability to "show what happened rather than to tell it."²⁹ By suggesting the role of *enargeia* in poetic descriptions of landscape, Leach hints at the important role of the reader as a spectator in reading these images.³⁰ Her method of inquiry can be fruitfully applied to the study of dream descriptions

in poetry, not because there are equivalent depictions of dreams in visual art, but because the language of dream descriptions often employs vivid imagery to convey imagery that evokes or even overlaps with that of works of visual art. This book draws specifically upon Leach's attention to the role of spectatorship in both visual and textual contexts, especially since it explores the ways in which poets who describe dreams engage their readers as spectators and focuses upon both dreamer and reader as specific types of viewers.

Elegy and Vision

Closely related to the visual sensibility of the elegists is their preoccupation with the act of looking; that is, vision itself. It is well known that Propertius establishes vision as central to the fabric of elegy in the first line of poem 1.1: "Cynthia prima suis miserum me cepit ocellis" ("Cynthia was the first to capture and make me wretched with her eyes"). Here the poet introduces his lover, Cynthia, specifically describing her ability to subjugate him with her eyes. With this line as the touchstone, scholarly treatments of the role of vision in elegiac poetry have been preoccupied with the relationship between vision and power as it defines the lovers' eroticism. Several analyses of vision in elegy have used the concept of the gaze to critique the intersection of power and eroticism in the act of looking as described in elegy. The concept of the gaze is foundational for feminist film criticism, as it argues for a powerful and inherently scopophilic male gaze.³¹ As Laura Mulvey argues in her seminal work, the male viewer in cinema takes pleasure in the act of looking and in turn fetishizes the female object of his looking. Gaze theory has been applied to several works of Greek and Roman literature to illustrate how female bodies are often put on display for the pleasure of a male viewer and hence for the reader of the text.³²

Many scholars have seen elegy, with its persistent dichotomy between the male narrator and the female subject of his poetry, as fertile ground for the discussion of viewing and objectification of the lover. In her work on the intersection of eroticism and violence in elegy, Ellen Greene uses the concept of the gaze as a way to critique Ovid's objectification of Corinna in several of the *Amores* poems, arguing, for example, that Corinna's nude body in *Amores* 1.5 is "a spectacle, the fixed object of the *amator's* ravishing gaze."³³ The notions that the gaze is exclusively male and that the viewer alone has power over the object of the gaze have been challenged in several contributions to Ronnie Ancona and Ellen Greene's coedited volume *Gendered Dynamics in Latin Love Poetry* (2005). Kerrill O'Neill's essay in this collection, in particular, scrutinizes the idea of a one-way gaze by analyzing instances of the "disrupted gaze" in Propertius's poems, moments in which

Cynthia derives power over the narrator by acting with an awareness of his gaze upon her.³⁴

In her recent contribution to the study of vision in love elegy, Stacie Raucci expands the scope of the topic beyond the private, erotic gaze to include specific public contexts in which the act of looking is privileged, such as funeral processions and public games.³⁵ Her analysis is specifically concerned with grounding the discussion of vision in the work of the elegists within the context of Roman theories of vision, such as those espoused by Lucretius. In this way, her work considers the elegists' preoccupation with vision as part of a cultural phenomenon, and thus connects the descriptions of vision in elegy to the actual visual experiences of the readers of elegy. But despite its expansion of the parameters for the study of vision in elegy beyond its connection to eroticism, Raucci's work does not extend to dreams.

In many ways this book attempts to unite scholarly interest in elegy's relationship to visual art with that genre's obsession with vision through close readings of the representation of dreaming as a particular type of visual experience. For me, the closest parallel for the type of representation we see in dream descriptions is with ekphrasis, the description of a work of visual art.³⁶ Observation of the similarity between these literary devices is not new. Shadi Bartsch, in her study of the role of description in the Greek novel, explicitly links dream descriptions with the ekphrases of works of visual art so prominent in the novels. Rather than dismissing these episodes as digressions from the central plot, she offers an analysis that shows their intricate connection to the central narrative. In particular, as Bartsch demonstrates, the dream descriptions (like the described subject matter of the works of visual art) either reflect or predict events to come.³⁷

Expanding on Bartsch's study, Tim Whitmarsh shifts the discussion of ekphrasis in the Greek novels of Heliodorus and Achilles Tatius from the narratological to the ontological. In returning to the ancient definition of ekphrasis, which referred to "an evocative description designed to make the reader or listener experience the phenomena described as though actually present," he writes that "ekphrastic mimesis is a form of deceptive illusionism, invoking a fake, surrogate reality."³⁸ Not only does his work demonstrate with a concrete example how ekphrases frequently draw attention to the elaborate play between realism and deception within the work of visual art they describe, but he also shows how this feature of the ekphrasis then "seeps" out into the outer narrative, providing a template for other instances in which illusion and deception are prominent. Whitmarsh is not interested in what the ekphrases might reveal about the development of the plot; rather, he points out that the inherent duplicity of ekphrasis—that it purports to convey something real or objective, but then consistently violates this mode by

undermining its realism with reference to impossible features of the work of art—is a kind of code for understanding other instances of duplicity in the narrative.

These observations on the Greek prose narratives can be profitably applied to the dreams of elegy that are at the core of the present study. Although Bartsch's interests lie in defining the hermeneutic qualities of the novels' dreams, her fundamental equation between dreams and ekphrasis as descriptive modes that engage the reader of the novel in similar ways is of relevance to our inquiry. Whitmarsh's attention to the ways in which this observed similarity between ekphrasis of works of visual art and other modes of description can expose for us the inherent duplicity of all acts of description that bring before the eyes something that is not actually present is particularly helpful for the approach I adopt here.

Jaś Elsner's work on ekphrasis, in particular, has influenced my inquiry into the visual nature of dream descriptions.³⁹ In a 2007 article, Elsner identifies and discusses what he calls "a specific and repeated feature in the ekphrasis of art—an interest in *viewing*."⁴⁰ Beginning with Catullus's ekphrasis of the embroidered coverlet in poem 64, and tracing the theme of Ariadne's abandonment in the poetry of Propertius and Ovid, Elsner delves into an exploration of Vergil's description of the viewer's response to looking, using the ekphrases of the *Aeneid*, and ends with an examination of viewers within the frames of Roman wall paintings depicting Ariadne's abandonment. The scope of Elsner's inquiry, which is broad in its sweep but guided by his focus on statements about or depictions of the viewer in all of these contexts, allows him both to bring together disparate examples from poetry under one investigative rubric and to connect examples from poetry and visual art through the common feature of the prominence of viewers in these works.

One of this book's central arguments is that Rome's elegiac poets responded to the challenge of conveying the experience of dreaming in a textual narrative by characterizing the dream as an image and emphasizing the visual component of the dream experience. They did this not simply by evoking works of visual art in their descriptions of dreams, but by acknowledging the similarity between seeing dreams and viewing works of visual art. At issue in this comparison is the potential for the illusion of reality in both types of image. The deception created by the illusion of reality within a dream or a work of visual art both absorbs the viewer and encourages him to be aware of his own viewing experience as he engages with the image. When describing this experience through ekphrasis, the viewer of a work of visual art might convey this duality. For example, he might allude in an ekphrasis to the experience of looking at an image by commenting on the paradoxical appearance of animation or some other "impossible" feature of it.

The earliest example of this type of commentary occurs in Homer's famous ekphrasis of the shield of Achilles in *Iliad* 18, where repeated references to the metals used and the skill of the object's creator remind the reader that the scenes represented are both bound by and defiant of their medium.⁴¹ In lines 548–49, for example, Homer comments on the appearance of plowed earth on the shield: ἦ δὲ μελαίνετ' ὄπισθεν, ἄρηρομένη δὲ ἑώκει, / χρυσεῖη περ ἑοῦσα: τὸ δὲ περὶ θαῦμα τέτυκτο ("and the field grew black behind, and seemed as though it had been ploughed, despite being made of gold; this constituted the marvel of the work"). Homer's use of the verb ἑώκει ("it seemed") conveys the successful illusionism of the image, but, as Andrew Becker notes, "Appreciation of the verisimilitude of the image, however, calls attention to the describer's reaction."⁴² The viewer and narrator of the image comments upon the success of the image's illusionism by acknowledging and referring to the mechanism (Hephaestus's skill) that has achieved it. He is both taken in by and critical of its illusionism. For a dreamer, this awareness occurs upon waking, when the dreamer considers the images of the dream from the detached perspective of a viewer and chooses to describe them in a narrative to his or her reader or listener. Homer's use of the verb ἑώκει to describe the paradoxical appearance of plowed earth on a shield fashioned in gold should recall for us the use of the participle *visus* by Aeneas and Propertius in their descriptions of the actions of the dead during their dream visits. Like the viewer of the shield, these dreamers include in their narration of their dreams an acknowledgment that what appeared real in the dream was precisely incongruous with "reality."

In the introduction to their recent coedited volume on the subject of ekphrasis, Shadi Bartsch and Jaś Elsner observe that "the referent [of an ekphrasis] must always lie beyond the medium of words that describe it."⁴³ In his essay within the volume, Elsner takes this observation further, asserting that the subject of ekphrasis "is not the verbal depiction of a visual object, but rather the verbal enactment of the gaze that tries to relate with and penetrate the object."⁴⁴ His words echo Don Fowler's observation that "there is no neutral, zero-focalized way of linearizing a visual scene."⁴⁵ These comments suggest that in attempting to re-create the original visual experience for a reader or listener, a narrator inescapably reveals some aspect of his or her own, subjective relationship to whatever is described.

As with ekphrasis, so too with dream narration: the description is capable of revealing as much about the visual experience of the viewer-narrator as it may regarding what was viewed. By reconsidering vision and visual description through the unique phenomenon of dreaming, I posit that the dreamer, who both participates as a viewer in the dream and, upon waking, (re)views the images of the dream from a detached perspective, also engages in a particular type of subjective

viewing. This subjectivity, which trades upon conveying personal, private, and intimate experience to an audience of readers through the use of familiar tropes and methods of discourse, is a distillation of the larger subjective program of elegiac poetry.

Dreaming in the First Person: Monologue, *Enargeia*, and Dream Description

As Joseph Farrell reminds us, anyone approaching the definition of Roman elegy as a genre would do well to define parameters. Drawing attention to the remarkable Roman innovation in the genre of elegy, Farrell divides the corpus of Latin poetry written in elegiac verse into loose categories, such as “proto-elegy,” exemplified by Catullus; “canonical elegy,” the love poetry that dominates Roman elegy; and “meta-elegy,” such as Ovid’s *Heroides* and *Fasti*.⁴⁶ Acceptance of divisions, however, should not inhibit the reader’s appreciation of common features among the diverse types of poems encountered in the corpus. Rather, by acknowledging where the types of elegy diverge, one is able to appreciate points of convergence between individual poems or passages without insisting upon a dominant unifying feature.

Alessandro Barchiesi has called elegy the “genre of monologue *par excellence*,”⁴⁷ defining the hallmark of Roman elegy as “the constant effect of an individual voice, drawing into itself any and every theme.”⁴⁸ To Barchiesi, Roman love elegy differs from other genres of literature because it is characterized by “a unifying perspective” rather than a “unifying theme.” This unifying perspective is one of “monologic reduction,”⁴⁹ a rubric that allows Barchiesi to consider the female voices of Ovid’s *Heroides* alongside the male-authored and male-narrated poems of the more traditional class of love elegy. This focus on perspective is reflected in what Paul Allen Miller calls a “lyric consciousness,” characterized, in his words, by a “uniquely interiorized voice.”⁵⁰ Recognition of this shared feature allows Miller to follow a trajectory from the poetry of Catullus to Ovid’s exile poetry in his *Subjecting Verses* (2004), a work that explicitly challenges the traditional boundaries assigned within the genre of elegiac poetry.

In my definition of parameters among the large corpus of verses written in elegiac couplets by the authors Tibullus, Propertius, and Ovid, I do not limit myself to the subsection loosely referred to as love elegy, consisting of the self-contained books of elegies of Tibullus, Propertius, and the *Amores* of Ovid, although all of the dreams discussed contain some element of the erotic themes associated specifically with love elegy. Beyond this, it is the common feature of first-person narration that links the diverse dream descriptions selected from the works of these

three authors. This important feature is also correlated with a fundamental distinction between “episode” dreams and “epiphany/message” dreams. In the former, the dreamer narrates his experience, which may include the speech of characters within the dream; in the latter, the speech of the visitor dominates the dream account. This inquiry is limited to the narration of “episode” dreams: dreams in which the dreamer is in some way a participant in, even if only as a witness, a scene or scenes within a setting that appears removed from the physical setting in which he or she (in reality) sleeps or fantasizes. Therefore, I exclude Propertius 4.7, for example, as it is predominantly an epiphany/message dream.

Dreaming is an exclusive business. As Cicero warns his brother Quintus in *De Divinatione* 2.136, dream accounts are untrustworthy, for they are difficult for another person to corroborate: “Sed haec externa ob eamque causam ignota nobis sunt, non nulla etiam ficta fortasse. Quis enim auctor istorum?” (“But these [dreams] belong to others and thus are unknowable by us; some perhaps are even made up. For who vouches for those dreams?”). As readers we approach the dreams of literature, however, with diminished suspicion, for we accept these dreams as part of an already fictional world and, instead of interrogating them for their relationship to an outside truth, we wonder about the purpose they might serve within their invented contexts. Any dream narrated in the first person, however, is a reminder of what Cicero complains about: the listener or reader, as the recipient of the dream account, has only the authority of the dreamer to go on in terms of its claim to authenticity. The urgency with which the dream narrations of elegy are recounted, often heightened by the narrator’s reference to the emotional state in which the dream has left him or her, the fleeting nature of the dream, or the dreamer’s confusion about its content, gives the reader a false sense of intimacy; the reader feels somewhat like a bedfellow, hearing upon waking something spontaneous rather than crafted. But I would argue that the fact of first-person narration should instead encourage the reader to focus upon the way a dreamer crafts a narrative of the dream experience in the telling.

If the monologue is predominant in Roman elegy, then the first-person dream narration forms a specific subgenre within this larger category of elegy’s defining mode of narration. In fact, one could argue that dream narration is the ultimate exemplar of the monologic subjectivity that characterizes most of Roman elegy, for in this type of monologue, a dreamer by definition reveals a personal, interior experience from a necessarily subjective viewpoint, usually in an uninterrupted monologue. In its structure then, the dream narrative brings to the fore the central conceit of the self-contained elegy: that the narrator grants the reader access to the intimate details of his or her private existence as a sort of confidant. But because dream narration generally expects some type of response from the listener or

reader—since dreams are shared in order to be interpreted, decoded, and thus rendered sensible to the narrator sharing the dream—they constitute a particular type of monologue, one that assumes a silent interlocutor charged with a specific task. Defining the dream narration in this way should encourage us to consider how the dream narrator engages the reader specifically as a second-hand viewer of the scenes he or she conjures in order to share as closely as possible the experience of dreaming. It is in this aspect that dream narration and ekphrasis share a particular bond.

In his treatise *On Divination during Sleep*, Aristotle compares dream images to “likenesses” (τὰς ὁμοιότητας), images akin to “reflections in water” (τοῖς ἐν τοῖς ὕδασι εἰδώλοις, 464b8–9), whose correlation to what they represent from the dreamer’s waking reality shifts as the surface of the water moves.⁵¹ In his recent work on dreams in Greek culture, Giulio Guidorizzi redeploys Aristotle’s analogy to describe the frustrating process of remembering a dream as like looking at a reflection in a distorted mirror or in a basin of water disturbed by a breeze.⁵² In Guidorizzi’s analogies, the dreamer upon waking is left with a blurred impression of the dream, one that is both related to and alienated from the actual dream experience. Furthermore, as time elapses, the murky dream image recedes. The evanescence of dreams is one reason why it is notoriously difficult for dreamers to recall their dreams in a way that approximates the actual experience. The first-person narrator of a dream, like those we are about to encounter in the following chapters, faces additional challenges in trying to translate the elusive experience of dreaming in the isolated world of sleep into a textual narrative recounting the intensity of that experience in which he or she includes a reader or listener in the re-creation.

Is there a technique for surmounting the difficulties of conveying the images of a dream and restoring some of the immediacy and indelibility of their initial appearance? As R. G. A. van Lieshout has shown, when the visitor in an epiphany dream is described by a dreamer as ἐναργής (“vivid”), the term Penelope uses in *Odyssey* 4.841 to describe the vision of Iphthime, the dreamer refers to a quality that is perceived visually, rather than aurally. Lieshout writes that *enargeia* “qualifies the dream apparition as ‘real,’ ‘bodily,’ ‘in the flesh,’ and is, therefore, ominously significant.”⁵³ The designation ἐναργής lends credibility to the narration and thus to the narrator’s experience. Can this concept be applied to dreams that do not contain visits from messengers, but rather images and episodes that also need to be marked out as “real” by their dreamers? The chapters to follow argue that *enargeia* (“vividness”) has its own special purpose in the narration of episode dreams—namely, to restore immediacy to an image that has begun to blur in the rippling water of consciousness. Vivid description thus allows the dreamer to clear the

muddiness from the fading image of the dream and effectively collapse the span of time between dream experience and narration.

Book Overview

Chapter 1 serves as a foundation for the subsequent four chapters. By examining several Roman authors who describe the experience of dreaming as visual in nature, the case studies of the first chapter establish a common context for the individual studies contained in the book's remaining chapters. Chapter 1 assembles examples from elegy and other genres of literature in order to establish a taxonomy of the language and rhetorical devices commonly used to describe dreams and other visual phenomena. In particular, this chapter studies the use of the verb *videre* ("to see") in dream accounts from a variety of literary sources to establish the parallel between dreaming and seeing, and hence dream and image, as widespread in Roman culture. Close consideration of references to dreaming and visual experience in the works of Ennius, Cicero, and Lucretius provides perspective on attitudes toward dreams in the elegists' cultural context. This chapter also explores comparisons between dream descriptions and other modes of description, such as ekphrasis, using examples from Vergil's *Aeneid* to substantiate the comparison. The chapter culminates in a close reading of the dream in the pseudo-Ovidian *Amores* 3.5, which introduces several features of dream narration that will be explored in greater depth throughout the book.

Chapter 2 uses the common characterization of Tibullus's poetry as dreamlike as a starting point for identifying and scrutinizing the elements of his poetry that inspire this description. Considering the strong expression of wishes and unfulfilled desires in Tibullus's poetry, it is worth noting that the poet does not recount his own nighttime dreams anywhere in his poetry, a feature that distinguishes him from his fellow elegists Propertius and Ovid. In particular, chapter 2 considers Tibullus's elaborate but unfulfilled wish for a rustic life with his estranged lover, Delia, in poem 1.5, a vignette often called a "dream." Interpreting this episode as an example of *phantasia* (the rhetorical term for a "mental image" or "imagination"), this chapter explores *phantasia* as a creative process and establishes a connection between fantasy and dream narration as creative acts. We shall see that Tibullus deliberately isolates his fantasy within the poem, much as a painter frames a painting, in order to highlight his creative act. The chapter also suggests comparisons between the content of Tibullus's fantasy and the imagery of a simile that follows it, thus introducing my methodology for comparing the descriptions of dreams and fantasies with other descriptive modes in poetry.

With Tibullus's fantasy of an alternative reality with Delia in mind, chapter 3 examines the nightmare recounted in Propertius's poem 2.26a. In this poem, the narrator describes a dream of his lover in a shipwreck, oscillating between description of the dream itself and commentary on the images of the dream. Treatments of this dream tend to focus upon its implications for understanding the psychology of the narrator—that is, what it might reveal about the underlying fears or anxieties about his relationship with his lover that give rise to this dream.⁵⁴ My interest in this poem lies not so much in its reference to the external or “real” relationship between the narrator and his lover, but rather in the moment of visualization created within the space of the dream. Specifically, I argue that by using analogies from mythology to describe his experience, the poet seeks to re-create the abstract realm of his dream in terms that are visually accessible for the reader. By using language that evokes the visual representation of mythological subjects such as Theseus and Ariadne, the poet suggests for his reader a mode for viewing the images of his dream. My interpretation of the poet's method in this poem suggests a connection between simile, dream, and the pendant paintings popular in the decorated rooms of Pompeian houses, roughly contemporaneous with the poet's lifetime.

Moving from the inscrutable images of Propertius's nightmare to his dream of inspiration atop Mount Helicon, chapter 4 examines the poet's account of his oneiric encounter with Apollo and the Muses in poem 3.3. My analysis in this chapter provides a new interpretation of this well-known initiation dream, emphasizing the dreamer's experience as a viewer within the context of his dream. Drawing upon other poems in which Propertius describes his experience as a viewer of visual art, I demonstrate how the dreamer's description of himself in Apollo's cave on Mount Helicon in poem 3.3 calls upon the language and other trademarks of ekphrasis. I enhance my reading of the viewer's experience in the poem by comparing it with the viewer's experience of looking at two extant works of visual art: a Hellenistic sculpted frieze and the illusionistic wall paintings from a villa on the Bay of Naples.

The book's fifth chapter interprets Ovid's account of the rape of Rhea Silvia by the god Mars and her subsequent dream in book 3 of the *Fasti*, with close attention to the visual qualities of the poet's description of this encounter and its aftermath. The analysis considers the passage in conjunction with representations of the encounter between Mars and Rhea Silvia in works of visual art, such as a mosaic from Ostia. Chapter 5 offers a comparison between the modes through which poet and artist suggest the simultaneity of rape and dream, and hint at the consequences of the rape in the story of the twins Romulus and Remus. Ovid's dream of Rhea Silvia is filled with visual symbols that call out for interpretation. In her case, the fact that no one but the reader is present to hear, much less interpret,

her dream intensifies the pathos of her tragic situation. But because of the legendary nature of her story, the reader of the *Fasti* passage needs no assistance in interpreting the relevance of her dream for the subsequent narrative. Considering the passage alongside visual representations of the encounter between Mars and Rhea Silvia greatly enhances comprehension of the visual dynamics of Ovid's scene.

This book traces an arc from the unattainable fantasy of Tibullus 1.5 to the unavoidable tragedy of Rhea Silvia's dream/rape in Ovid's *Fasti*. While Tibullus envisions an idyllic life with Delia, one in which their harvest is abundant and peace reigns, his reverie is abruptly cut short by encroaching reminders of reality. By contrast, Rhea Silvia, as she is violated in her sleep, witnesses violence in her dream, which ironically portends the birth and endurance of her progeny, while it marks—albeit indelibly—the end of her role in the narrative of Rome's founding. Despite their evanescence, or perhaps because of it, the descriptions of these experiences convey an intensity and an immediacy that allows them a permanence only possible through a recounting, an act that by its nature distorts the original experience. Although they have little in common on the surface, Tibullus's fantasy, Rhea Silvia's dream, and the many other dreams and visions addressed in this book have much to teach us about the Roman notion of “seeing a dream” and about the complexities of conveying that experience in textual terms.



1 Dream Description and Visual Experience in Latin Poetry

E. R. Dodds observed that “the language used by the Greeks at all periods in describing dreams of all sorts appears to be suggested by a type of dream in which the dreamer is the passive recipient of an objective vision.”¹ Indeed there is ample evidence from a diverse number of sources that the Greeks considered dreams to be primarily visual experiences. In addition to the evidence that can be adduced from the types of dreams reported, the vocabulary used to describe the experience of dreaming, such as *ὄναρ ἰδεῖν* (“to see a dream”), and the dream itself, such as *ὄψις* (“vision”), is a crucial component of our understanding of the Greek conception of the dream as visual in nature.² By contrast, little attention has been paid to the counterparts for these expressions in Latin literature.

The primary goal of this chapter is to establish a basic lexicon for dream description in Latin literature. In particular, this chapter looks closely at the language that Roman authors use to describe the experience of dreaming and the content of the dreams they recount. This lexical analysis leads to a discussion of parallels between dreaming and other types of description, such as ekphrasis, in which the vocabulary of vision is used in similar fashion. The inquiry presented in this chapter ranges beyond elegy into discussions of didactic and epic poetry in order to establish the literary and cultural milieu in which the elegiac poets composed their dream poems. The chapter ends with an analysis of an elegiac poem that contains many of the elements presented in the chapter. In so doing, it sets the stage for the close readings of the first-person dreams and fantasies of elegiac poetry that occupy the subsequent chapters.

My inquiry begins with analysis of the Latin verb *videre* (“to see”), which is commonly used in the passive voice to introduce dream descriptions. Despite the

fact that this use of the passive voice is standard, close analysis of the verb both in specific contexts and in comparison with other verbs reveals important information about how it is deployed in dream descriptions to define the dream not just as something seen, but as something perceived in a particular way. I look first at how the Romans conceived of dreaming as a type of seeing and second at how they conceived of dream descriptions as the way this seeing was conveyed in a verbal narrative.

Distinguishing between Seeing and Dreaming

Outside the context of dream description, the Greek language distinguishes between the concepts of “seeming” and “appearing” with the verbs *δοκεῖν* (“to seem”) and *φαίνεσθαι* (“to appear”). In his study of the phenomenology of sight and appearance in archaic Greek, Raymond Adolph Prier observes that *δοκεῖν* refers to “a kind of tentative guess about, or ‘look at,’ some situation,”³ while *φαίνεσθαι* refers to “the phenomenon of revelation.”⁴ While *φαίνεσθαι* is the standard verb for describing (external) epiphanies of the gods,⁵ *δοκεῖν* is used to describe an internal viewpoint.

The meaning of the verb *δοκεῖν* in general usage has a parallel in dream descriptions. Studying the use of the impersonal form *δοκεῖ* plus the infinitive to describe the content of a dream in several examples from early Greek poetry, Lieshout has observed that “the verb which marks the particular sort of reality awareness in a dream is *δοκεῖν*. It places both the subjective and objective dream-records in parenthesi.”⁶ This verb is used by a dreamer to admit an element of opinion into his reporting of the dream, and thus it reveals a particular dimension of the dreamer’s perception of the dreamed image. According to Lieshout, the verb is never used on its own to mean the equivalent of “to appear”; rather, it “characterizes the experience rather than the apparition.”⁷ A dream description contained in a fragment from the lyric poet Stesichorus uses both verbs in a manner that illustrates the distinction between them: τᾷ δὲ δράκων ἐδόκησε μολεῖν κάρᾳ βεβρωτόμενος ἄκρον, / ἔκ δ’ ἄρα τοῦ βασιλεὺς Πλεισθενίδας ἐφάνη (“she dreamt there came a serpent with a bloodied crest, and out of it appeared a king of Pleisthenes’ line,” fr. 43).⁸ In this case, we see that *δοκεῖν* (*ἐδόκησε*) is used to refer to the action of the dream and the way its strangeness is perceived by the dreamer (lit. “a serpent bearing a bloodied crest seemed to her to come”), while *φαίνεσθαι* (*ἐφάνη*) is used to refer to the dreamer’s experience of seeing an apparition, within the context of the (albeit illusory) dream.

The Greek verbs *δοκεῖν* and *φαίνεσθαι* do not have direct equivalents in Latin, but a cursory sense of the distinction between them is helpful as we turn to

the discussion of the semantics of dream descriptions in the Roman sources. In Latin, *videre* is the verb most commonly employed to begin the dream description. The verb has the basic meaning “to see” in the active voice, but in the passive voice it is most frequently used to mean something equivalent to the English verbs “to seem” or “to appear,” rather than simply “to be seen.”⁹ The versatility of the Latin verb can be understood by contrast with the English “to see.” Although the passive “to be seen” can connote something close to “to seem,” the English verbs “see” and “seem” are etymologically distinct. The English intransitive verb “to appear,” however, collapses the distinction between the Greek verbs δοκεῖν and φαίνεσθαι, as its meaning can range from “to come forth into view; to become visible” to “to be to the mind, or in one’s opinion” to “to seem, as distinguished from *to be*.”¹⁰ Thus the English verb “to appear” conveys the dual meaning of the passive form of the Latin verb *videre* and is often the best choice for translating the Latin. As the passive voice of *videre* encompasses the meanings of both δοκεῖν and φαίνεσθαι as well as the various meanings of the English verb “to appear,” it is thus important to pay close attention to nuance when analyzing the language of Latin dream descriptions. As I shall argue, the ambiguity of the verb necessitates that we remain aware of the narrator’s acknowledgment of the gulf between actual vision and dream vision, and hence the gulf between his own experience during the dream and that of his listener or reader who receives the description of the dream.

Despite the fact that vision is the sense through which most dreams are recalled, the active voice of *videre* is rarely used by Latin authors to describe the experience of seeing a dream.¹¹ As with the conventional phrase *ex viso/visu* used on dedicatory inscriptions, the predominant use in literary dream descriptions of the passive voice of the verb, either in finite forms such as *videtur* or *visus est* or the passive participle (*visum*, *visa*), attests to a fundamental conception of dreaming as an act of visual perception. One crucial difference between the idiom *visus est* and a conventional phrase such as *ex viso* is that the latter stands in place of the description of the dream, as Gil Renberg laments with some frustration in his study.¹² By contrast, in literary dreams the idiom usually prefaces the description of a dream’s content. Thus there is greater scope for discussing the nuances of the idiom *visus est* if we consider that it both signals the appearance of a dream to the dreamer and acts as a commentary upon the *way* the dream image appears *to* the dreamer.

The work of Lucretius is a suitable place to begin, since his *De Rerum Natura* contains one of the principal extended treatments in Latin of visual perception; furthermore, it is within the context of this discussion that he presents his theory of dreams. In lines 379–521 of *De Rerum Natura* book 4, Lucretius treats the infallibility of the senses, arguing that the senses should not be blamed for what is

the mind's task to sort out (4.379–86). A survey of passages from this section will illustrate how Lucretius takes pains to distinguish between actual perception and dream vision or other types of visual illusion, often using a form of *videre* in the passive to refer to the latter. He uses *videre* in the passive twenty times in the 142 lines selected for this discussion. In every case, the verb is used to describe and comment upon the various ways in which a visual experience is perceived incorrectly.

Lucretius's first example (4.387–90) deals with the misperception of someone on a boat that other stationary vessels are instead the ones moving:

qua vehimur navi, fertur, cum stare videtur;
quae manet in statione, ea praeter creditur ire.
et fugere ad puppim colles campique videntur
quos agimus praeter navem velisque volamus.

[The ship we are sailing in is carried along when it seems to stand still, while the one that is stationary is believed to go past us. Hills and plains seem to fly astern when we drive the ship past them, gliding with our sails.]

In this example, the verb *videtur* in line 387 conveys the passenger's impression that his moving ship is actually stationary. This deception is visual, a fact that is revealed in the second line, where we learn that the impression is created by the misinterpretation of something seen by the viewer, another ship docked at shore. As a result of this mistaken impression, a second illusion is created in relation to the first: namely, that a stationary ship is in fact the one moving.¹³ The use of the verb *creditur* is similar in force to *videtur*, although it alludes more clearly to the mind's mistaken conviction, which results from a misinterpretation of visual information. A phenomenon similar to that conveyed as a sensation in the first example has its corollary in the second example, where the verb *videntur* is used to refer to a visual image, that of (stationary) hills and fields that appear to the eyes of the person on a moving ship to be moving. In his commentary on this line, John Godwin calls the example a "stronger, fantastic image" and observes that "such a ludicrous belief, he implies, is really no more surprising than the earlier sensation described in lines 387–88."¹⁴ In both instances, *videre* in the passive conveys a viewer's erroneous interpretation of a visual impression. In these cases, the viewer makes his subjective judgment based upon the appearance of external images, presented with the third-person verbs *videtur* and *videntur*. In the next example we will see the passive of *videre* used in reference to the viewer himself.

Repetition of the verb *videre* in line 418 draws attention to the difference between the verb's meaning in its active and passive forms.¹⁵ In lines 414–19, Lucretius describes the visual illusions caused by looking into a puddle of water:

at collectus aquae digitum non altior unum,
 qui lapides inter sistit per strata viarum, 415
 despectum praebet sub terras impete tanto,
 a terris quantum caeli patet altus hiatus,
 nubila despicere et caelum ut videare videre <et>
 corpora mirande sub terras abdita caelo.

[Yet a pool of water no deeper than one finger's breadth that collects between the stones in paved streets offers a view beneath the earth of a depth as great as the height of the gaping mouth of the sky from the earth, so that you seem to look down on the clouds and the sky and see bodies hidden marvelously in a sky under the earth.]

Lucretius juxtaposes the words *videare* and *videre* in line 418, creating a word play in the resulting clause. The pun conveys succinctly the paradox inherent in the instances mentioned in this portion of the text—that “seeming to see” is a type of seeing that occurs when our mind is tricked into thinking that it actually sees something. In this clause, the meaning of *videare* (“you seem”) qualifies the act of looking (*videre*, “to see”) as a deceptive type of looking that appears real to the viewer as he engages in it.¹⁶ The phrase “you seem to see” means “you think you are seeing” or “your mind convinces you that what it sees (a reflection) is reality.”

At the end of this section about visual illusion, Lucretius turns to the experience of dreaming in lines 453–61. The uses of the verb *videre* in the passive voice in the section on dreams demonstrate how the verb covers the same semantic range regardless of whether it describes waking illusions or dreams. Even though the impressions described are offered to provide a contrast between the sensation we feel in dreams and the reality that our senses are “bound in sleep,” the fact that this discussion comes on the heels of the discussion of visual illusions, and most immediately following the discussion of the strictly visual experience of seeing double as a result of pressing upon the eye (lines 447–49), allows us to interpret the discussion of dream impressions in terms of other visual illusions. As with the visual illusions we might experience on a moving ship or when gazing into a pool of water that reflects an image above, so too with dreams we experience false perceptions. The difference is, however, that the impression we have while dreaming is of ourselves

experiencing several sensations—movement, vision, and sound—which, upon waking, prove to have been nothing but visual illusions.

In lines 455–61 Lucretius describes the semblance of movement and sound in a dream:

tum vigilare tamen nobis et membra movere	455
nostra videmur, et in noctis caligine caeca	
cernere censemus solem lumenque diurnum,	
conclusoque loco caelum mare flumina montis	
mutare et campos pedibus transire videmur,	
et sonitus audire, severa silentia noctis	460
undique cum constant, et reddere dicta tacentes.	

[We nonetheless seem to ourselves to be awake and to be moving our limbs, and in the blind blackness of night we think we see the sun and the light of day, and although we are in a confined space, we seem to exchange this for sky, sea, rivers, mountains, and to cross plains on foot and hear sounds when the stark silence of night is everywhere, and to reply with words although we do not speak.]

In our dreams, we seem to move our limbs and travel, and we seem to hear sounds despite the silence of the night. In this passage, the verbs *videmur* (used twice) and *cernere censemus* are used to describe the dreamer's perception that what he experiences during the dream is actual sensation perceived by the senses, giving the illusion of being awake (*vigilare*).¹⁷ In this example, the verb *videmur* refers to the dreamer's perceptual experience: the dreamer *appears* to act in a certain way (*movere*, *mutare*, *transire*) or to hear certain sounds in his dream (*audire*). The verb describes not vision but the acknowledgment that what has been experienced in the dream seems like what is experienced in waking reality. It is only upon waking that the gulf between these experiences is exposed. But it is significant that the verb is used in the context of dreams because apparently what has been “experienced” as sound, vision, or movement in dreams has actually taken place only as a vision. More detailed discussion of perception through the other senses such as hearing comes later in book 4.

The preceding analysis demonstrates the importance of characterizing the dream experience as a specific type of visual experience. Lucretius signals the dream's particularity by contrasting verbs that describe dreaming with those that refer to actual seeing. The verb *videre* in the passive voice does not have unilateral meaning, but in certain contexts the verb was used to point out the contrast between

visual illusion and actual sight. The difference between the visual perception of a person awake and that of a sleeper is discussed in a passage from Cicero's *Academica* (2 (*Lucullus*), 51–52). Here the speaker, representing the Stoic school of thought, criticizes the attitude of the New Academy (skeptics) toward *perspicuitas* (“the quality or fact of being self-evident” or “the perception of things as they are”), arguing that there is always a way to distinguish between real and false perceptions. The passage below comes amid a debate between the Skeptics and the Stoics about the possibility of believing false impressions as though they were real, an aspect of the larger debate about epistemology. Without delving too deeply into the context for the passage within that argument, I will use this exchange to illustrate certain semantic distinctions relevant to my discussion. I am not attempting to contextualize my observations about dreaming and visual experience within the philosophical discourse surrounding perception; rather, I am interested in the vocabulary used by the imagined speakers to convey their ideas as a way of establishing a contemporary dream vernacular.

In the section that follows, the first speaker, representing the ideas of Antiochus, claims that one can avoid being taken in by false presentations (*visa inania*) by declaring false all visions produced under circumstances in which perception is altered:¹⁸

omnium deinde inanium visorum una depulsio est, sive illa cogitatione informantur, quod fieri solere concedimus, sive in quiete sive per vinum sive per insaniam: nam ab omnibus eiusdem modi visis perspicuitatem, quam mordicus tenere debemus, abesse dicemus. quis enim, cum sibi fingit aliquid et cogitatione depingit, non simul ac se ipse commovit atque ad se revocavit sentit quid intersit inter perspicua et inania? eadem ratio est somniorum. num censes Ennium cum in hortis cum Servio Galba vicino suo ambulavisset dixisse: “visus sum mihi cum Galba ambulare”? at cum somniavit, ita narravit:

visus Homerus adesse poeta.

idemque in Epicharmo:

nam videbar somniare med ego esse mortuom.

itaque simul ut experrecti sumus visa illa contemnimus neque ita habemus ut ea quae in foro gessimus.

52. at enim dum videntur eadem est in somnis species eorumque quae vigilantes videmus!

[Consequently there is only one way of routing the difficulty about all unreal presentations, whether depicted by the imagination, which we admit frequently to take place, or in slumber or under the influence of wine or

insanity: we shall declare that all presentations of this nature are devoid of perspicuity, to which we are bound to cling tooth and nail. For who, when he creates something for himself and paints this in his imagination, does not, right when he has snapped himself out of it and has recalled himself, perceive the difference between clear and illusory visions? The same reasoning applies to dreams [*somnia*]. Do you believe that Ennius, when he had been for a walk with his neighbor Servius Galba, said: "I seemed [appeared] to walk with Galba"? However, when he had a dream, he described it as follows: "The poet Homer seemed [appeared] to stand beside me." And the same is true for the *Epicharmus*: "For I seemed [appeared] to dream that I myself was dead." And thus as soon as we wake up, we disparage those visions [dreams] and we do not equate them with the things we have done in the forum.

52. But you will say that while they are being seen in dreams, the appearance of these images is the same as those we see while we are awake.^{19]}

In the case of the dream, which he uses to illustrate the larger point, the distinction between describing something perceived while awake and something witnessed in a dream can be indicated by the use of the active and passive forms of the Latin verb *videre* ("to see"). The speaker cites as an example the words with which the poet Ennius, author of the *Annales*, referred to his dream vision of Homer.²⁰ According to the speaker's reasoning, Ennius would not describe walking with Galba in terms of visual perception (*visus sum*), as he is certain that it has actually occurred. When he recalls the event for description to another person, he does not need to qualify its validity because he is certain that it actually happened (and presumably could also call on Galba as a witness). There is also an explicit distinction between how we experience a walk with a friend (doing something) and how we experience dreams (seeing something or the appearance of something).²¹

The use of *videre* in the passive, as in the statement "*visus Homerus adesse poeta*" ("the poet Homer seemed [appeared] to stand beside me"), serves two functions. On the one hand, it acknowledges after the fact of waking that what was perceived as visually verifiable only seemed that way under the influence of sleep; on the other, it reinforces the notion that the person describing the event is the passive recipient of the visual information. Active seeing is distinct from passive seeing in the sense that it is used to describe what the speaker trusts has actually happened; because one cannot verify that he has really been visited by Homer, himself long deceased, one must qualify the experience by claiming that something seemed to have happened, an assertion that can only be made upon returning to one's rational perspective—in this case, by waking. Thus the use of

videre in the passive indicates the insertion of subjective perspective as part of the speaker's description.

Also of interest are the parallels between imagination and dreaming, although the former is clearly designated as a creative act, while the dream is something that appears without the dreamer's intervention. The verbs used for creating the empty images of the imagination (*inania*) are *ingere* ("mold") and *depingere* ("paint"), both borrowed from the visual arts and applied metaphorically to the process of creating images in the mind. These are images that can be classed as "empty" when the one who has imagined them returns to his senses ("ad se revocavit"). Like the images of the dream, described upon waking as *visa*, so too can the images of the imagination be classified as empty when the creator alters his perspective. There is an indication that what is seen in the imagination and what is seen in a dream, regardless of either image's origin, is a representation that can be easily distinguished from reality in retrospect, from a position of actual rather than internal vision.

In the second quotation, from the *Epicharmus*, the experience is at twice the distance from the dreamer's rational mind: the dubious experience implied by *somniare* is further called into question by the use of *videbar*; it is not simply that the dreamer dreamt something, but that he *appears* to have dreamt it (or, perhaps, that he dreamed that he had a dream of dying). His words convey his uncertainty not just about the dream, but about the actual act of dreaming. Perhaps it is the dream's capacity to display the death of the dreamer, the one event that a dreamer can with certainty dispel as "empty" immediately upon waking and returning to consciousness, that inspires this double layer of uncertainty.

The predicted response given in section 52 is also revealing of the difference between the usages of the active and passive voices. The subordinate clause "*dum videntur*" contrasts with the relative clause "*quae vigilantes videmus*." Although the dreamer will claim that, when he was experiencing them, the visions appeared the same as they would to someone awake, the verbs he chooses to describe this phenomenon are suggestive of the different types of visual experience discussed. In the first instance the visions occur to the viewer/dreamer (the phrase *dum videntur* actually indicates the duration of the dream, as though the whole experience of dreaming is one of extended passive viewing), while in the second they are the objects of his active vision (*videmus*). Thus passive and active forms distinguish between the realms in which the visions are seen, as well as how they are understood after the experience.

Furthermore, there is a distinction that hinges upon the word *species*. It is the *appearance* of the things seen in dreams that seems the same as what one might see while awake and actually experiencing them. Upon awaking and assessing what he

or she has seen, the dreamer refers to the similar appearance of dream images and waking images, rather than qualifying one or the other as real. This experience, however, is not something the dreamer can re-create after waking; rather, the dreamer can only recall the feeling of being convinced of the realistic appearance of the dream's images. Therefore, the use of the passive also conveys the dreamer's conviction that what he or she is experiencing and seeing in his sleep is real; the dreamer has no control over the images, nor does the dreamer have any sense that they are false.

Regardless of the specific philosophical stance being presented in these passages, there is an emphasis upon the experience of viewing in sleep and that of viewing while awake. It is a distinction to which a dreamer might draw attention by using the verb *videre* in the passive to underscore his or her altered state of perception and to acknowledge it as such. The impulse to describe a dream, such as we see in Ennius's line "*visus Homerus adesse poeta*," comes from an awareness of the gulf between perception in the dream and perception of the dream as a dream upon waking. Because the dream is not verifiable by anyone other than the dreamer, its importance can only gain objective recognition through its description to another person. Turning now to some dream descriptions in Latin poetry, I will point out modes used by epic and elegiac poets to communicate a dreamer's lingering impression of the dream to a listener or reader. We will look at the ways in which a dreamer's descriptions incorporate awareness of the gulf between perception in a dream and actual visual perception.

"Etiam si ficta sunt":

Dream Descriptions in Latin Poetry

Ennius's description of his vision of Homer has numerous parallels in literary dream descriptions. The epiphany/message dreams of Vergil's *Aeneid* are among the best known of these.²² The poem's first dream, in which Aeneas describes a vision of the ghost of Hector during the destruction of Troy, discussed briefly in the introduction, is introduced as follows: "*in somnis, ecce, ante oculos maestissimus Hector / visus adesse mihi largosque effundere fletus*" ("in my dreams, look, most sorrowful Hector seemed to stand right before my eyes and to weep plentiful tears," *Aen.* 2.270–71). The phrase "*Hector visus adesse mihi*" recalls Ennius's line very closely.²³ Furthermore, the participle *visus* communicates two aspects of the dream: what Hector looks like to the dreamer (both the fact that he was crying and the powerful impression his appearance leaves on Aeneas, who goes on to describe his mutilated body in detail), and his unlikely presence beside the dreamer. The interjection *ecce* reinforces the surprise of his appearance. Vergil

employs nearly identical language to introduce Aeneas's next dream, in which the Penates appear to the hero while he sleeps ("Phrygiiue penates / . . . visi ante oculos astare iacentis / in somnis," 3.148–51).²⁴

Dido too has consecutive dreams in the epic, each featuring the appearance of a male figure: Sychaeus or Aeneas. Unlike Aeneas's dreams of Hector and the Penates, which are narrated in the first person, each of Dido's dreams is narrated in the third person, by someone other than the dreamer. In the first instance, Venus explains to Aeneas that Dido has been visited by the ghost of her dead husband, Sychaeus, in a dream: "ipsa sed in somnis inhumati venit imago / coniugis ora modis attollens pallida miris" ("But in a dream came the very ghost of her unburied husband, raising his face pale with a spectral quality," 1.353–54). Like Aeneas's dreams of Hector and the Penates, Sychaeus appears to Dido to reveal an important message (lines 355–59). But in the description of Sychaeus's appearance, the only indication that the action took place during a dream is the phrase *in somnis*. The statement "imago venit" without that qualifier could have referred to a regular (waking) epiphany, such as that of Creusa's ghost when she appears to Aeneas at the end of book 2: "infelix simulacrum atque ipsius umbra Creusae / visa mihi ante oculos et nota maior imago" ("there appeared to me before my eyes the mournful image and ghost of Creusa herself, a form larger than her usual appearance," 2.772–73). Here too Creusa is described as an *imago*; the participle *visa* and prepositional phrase *ante oculos* recall the dream of Hector, but from context we know that she appears to Aeneas while he is awake and hastening about the city.

The description of Dido's second dream, which also involves the appearance of a male figure, this time Aeneas, employs different language to describe her vision. Maddened by her love for Aeneas, Dido is described (*Aen* 4.465–68) as raving like a bacchant and being pursued by Aeneas. Vergil describes her vision:

. . . agit ipse furemtem
in somnis ferus Aeneas, semperque relinqui
sola sibi, semper longam incommitata uidetur
ire uiam et Tyrios deserta quaerere terra.

[. . . In Dido's dream, savage Aeneas himself pursues her raving, and she always seems to herself to be abandoned, always going unaccompanied on the long road and seeking her fellow Tyrians in the deserted land.]

The context for the dream is introduced with the phrase *in somnis*, familiar from and evocative of her dream of Sychaeus in book 1.²⁵ But this dream description

differs from its counterpart in book 1 by using two main verbs. The first is *agit*, which describes Aeneas's action in the dream; but it is *videtur*, whose subject is Dido, that describes the predominant action of the dream. While Aeneas's action (from Dido's point of view) is definitive, as further stressed by *ipse*, her own behavior in the dream is qualified by the verb *videtur*. When describing her action in the dream in this way, Vergil distinguishes the dreamer's perception of herself from the action of the "visitor" to her dream.

In his analysis of dreams in Latin epic, Antonino Grillone pointed to this difference in the description of Dido's dreams as evidence for the use of *videri* to describe nightmare rather than external vision, implying that the nightmare was internally generated (and presumably a reaction to Dido's inner turmoil).²⁶ By contrast, he suggests, the vision of Sychaeus was a visitation. Otherwise, both dream accounts incorporate the formula *in somnis* to indicate the context of the dream and use a finite verb (*venit* or *agit*) to describe the action of the male actor in the dream. In the second dream, Aeneas's pursuit is certainly a significant aspect of the dream's nightmarish quality, but it is Dido's reaction to this—in the form of her description of what she is forced to do as a result of the pursuit—that is described in terms of its appearance of reality. This allows for its potential interpretation as a manifestation of her inner turmoil that has taken this familiar form in her dream ("*videtur . . . ire et . . . quaerere*").

Vergil had already mentioned an incident involving Dido's sensory perception (not a dream) a few lines earlier in 460–61: "*hinc [templum] exaudiri voces et verba vocantis / visa viri, nox cum terras obscura teneret*" ("from here [the tomb], the sounds and words of her speaking husband seemed to be heard, when dark night held the earth"). These lines reveal that Dido *seems* to hear, or thinks she hears, her husband's voice emanating from his cenotaph. Vergil's highly alliterative and euphonious phrase "*voces et verba vocantis / visa viri*," which various commentators have claimed conveys woe, horror, or solemnity,²⁷ refers (perhaps ironically) to the illusion of sound, rather than its actual perception. By referring to her husband's disembodied voice here, Vergil recalls Dido's visitation dream of Sychaeus from book 1.²⁸ Yet the "episode" dream of Aeneas to follow will differ from the "epiphany/message" dream of Sychaeus, with which this prelude experience at the tomb seems to be aligned. The repetition of *visa* in line 461 (at the tomb) and *videtur* in 467 (in the dream) twice indicates for the reader the subjective response of Dido in her madness—she seems to hear sounds (Sychaeus's voice) and see images (the dream of Aeneas's pursuit and her search for the Tyrians) that terrify her and contribute to her break from reality. Her eventual consuming madness is presaged by the uncertainty of her actual perception in the dream and the sensory experience that prefaces it.

Ilia's Dream Description

While Ennius's declaration of Homer's presence beside him in the *Annales* fragment certainly has a legacy in the visitation dreams of the *Aeneid*, Ilia's dream from the *Annales* is also an important precedent for Dido's dream of fleeing from Aeneas. Nita Krevans has pointed out the parallels between the dreams. One of the most obvious is the similar image of the dream's protagonist wandering alone and searching for someone elusive.²⁹ Ilia's dream in Ennius's *Annales* offers examples of the use of *videre* in the passive voice both to describe the appearance of characters in the dream and to convey the dreamer's uncertain impression of the dream.

In his account of Ilia's dream of abduction, one of the earliest dream descriptions in Latin literature, Ennius uses forms of the verb *videre* no fewer than three times in the seventeen-line passage (1.34–50 Skutsch). Ilia's dream is told in the first person from the perspective of the dreamer, unlike Dido's dreams in the *Aeneid*. One of the most compelling features of the dream description is the way in which the dreamer struggles to describe her own participation in the dream through a series of subjective reactions to its images and events. Because of the fragmentary nature of Ennius's text, the dream is left without interpretation. The reader lacks both commentary on the dream by others in the scene and explanation of its consequences by an omniscient narrator. The dream is disconnected from its surrounding narrative, and thus the episode leaves the reader with a strong impression of witnessing as closely as possible the dreamer's reaction to a dream, while still in the grip of its intensity. As Otto Skutsch observed, "The dream is remarkable. It combines the features of the Homeric type of dream, in which a god or person deceased appears to the sleeper to make an announcement or give a command, with certain aspects of the symbolic dream known from Herodotus and Attic Tragedy."³⁰ As a hybrid of epic and tragic elements, Ilia's dream is an appropriate point of entry into the study of first-person dream accounts in subsequent works of Latin literature from various genres, including elegiac poetry.³¹

Ilia's sense of confusion about what has happened is conveyed through her three uses of the verb *videre* in the passive voice as she tries to describe the dream to her sister and nurse. She first claims to have seen a handsome man abduct her, leading her through a willow grove (lines 38–39): "nam me visus homo pulcher per amoena salicta / et ripas raptare locosque novos" ("for a handsome man appeared to steal me away through pleasant willow groves and riverbanks—new places"). In this example, the participle *visus* (used in place of the phrase *visus est*, the same construction that Ennius used for his vision of Homer, discussed above) signals

the beginning of a dream description, but does so in a very particular way. What Ilia is about to describe is a visual impression of a series of occurrences that she cannot verify as actually having happened, both because they seemed so lifelike at the time and because they jar so strongly with her waking reality. The verb connotes the suddenness of this anonymous man's appearance (he appeared; his appearance was beyond my control) as well as the dreamer's disbelief that this abduction could have happened while she was asleep in her room (he seemed to lead me along, even though I was lying here in my bed). By using the verb of seeing, she encourages her listeners to envision what she herself has witnessed.

In lines 39–42, Ilia claims to have seen herself wandering alone in search of her sister: “ita sola / postilla, germana soror, errare videbar / tardaue vestigare et quaerere te neque posse / corde capessere (“and thus alone later, my sister, I appeared [seemed] to wander and to track you slowly and to seek you and to be unable to catch you, although I wished to [*corde*]”). The repetition of the passive verb reinforces the sense of the dreamer's lack of control over the images of her dream as well as the recognition of the impossibility of the situation that she describes: she seemed to be unable to find the very person who is right there in front of her as she is recounting the dream. Furthermore, the first-person verb, interestingly, captures the narrator's dual role as participant in the dream and viewer of the dream, both within it and in retrospect.

The third usage of the verb in the passive is the most striking because it refers to an instance in which the character it describes is not actually seen by the dreamer. In lines 43–45, the dream's third actor is introduced, also with a passive form of the verb *videre*: “exim compellare pater me voce videtur / his verbis: ‘o gnata, tibi sunt ante gerendae / aerumnae, post ex fluvio fortuna resistet’” (“Then our father seemed to address me aloud with these words: ‘Daughter, you will first have to bear hardships, but afterward [your] fortune will rise from the river’”). As with the other usages, the verb introduces a new character abruptly into the scene. Furthermore, the present tense of the verb communicates its suddenness. The placement of *voce* next to the verb *videtur* draws attention to the presence of Aeneas (*pater*) in voice, rather than in person.³² We could say that the phrase “compellare voce videtur” communicates a contradiction, if we take the verb literally to mean that “he appeared [i.e., was seen] to address me aloud with these words.” The meaning becomes clear as we read on, for Ilia informs us twice that Aeneas was not visible to her (“repente recessit” and “nec sese dedit in conspectum,” lines 45–46); her desperate attempts to see and communicate with him also underscore his absence. It is clear that the verb *videtur* here does not refer to sight within the dream, but rather to the dreamer's commentary on the strangeness of

hearing words (having the impression of words) without the confirmation of sight. Let us note that after this final use of the passive of *videre*, the remaining narration employs active indicative verbs (*recessit*, *dedit*, *tendebam*, and *vocabam*).

Ilia's switch from passive to active verbs signals a general shift within the passage. Even though she is still sleeping, there is a sense in which Ilia acts as though she wakes up after Aeneas's speech. Like a character who experiences a visitation dream and seeks his visitor in corporeal form—such as Achilles, who attempts to grasp the vanishing ghost of Patroclus in *Iliad* 23.99–101—Ilia entreats her visitor, reaching out for him in vain where she thinks he should be, in lines 47–49: “nec sese dedit in conspectum corde cupitus, / quamquam multa manus ad caeli caerula templa / tendebam lacrumans et blanda voce vocabam” (“and he could not present himself to be seen as I wished him to, although in tears I raised my hands to the deep blue vaults of the sky and called out with coaxing words”).³³ Ilia's tearful reaction of calling out to Aeneas in the dream is echoed in her calling out to her sister to retell the dream. The shift from passive description to active verbs also marks the end of the portion of the dream in which information about the future is imparted.

As Quintus suggests in Cicero's *De Divinatione*, Ennius accomplishes something authentically dreamlike in his account of Ilia's dream: “haec, etiamsi ficta sunt a poeta, non absunt tamen a consuetudine somniorum” (“These [the lines of Ilia's dream], even though they were created by a poet, are nevertheless similar to what we experience in actual dreams,” 1.42).³⁴ Ennius makes his fictional dream believable (“a consuetudine somniorum”) through both its content (the visitation from a figure of authority, Aeneas, and the threatening and disorienting circumstances described) and, I would argue, the language Ilia uses to describe the experience of the visitation (multiple forms of *videre*). The passive forms *visus (est)*, *videbar*, and *videtur*, which carry both the middle-voice meaning “seem to,” or “appear,” and the passive-voice meaning “be seen,” imply both the original experience of “seeing” the dream and the judgment of the narrator upon waking that what she “saw” were actually just dream images, existing in the space of the dream alone, however forceful their impact. Furthermore, by narrating the dream with passive verbs and diverting agency from herself within the action of the dream, Ilia lends her description a kind of objective perspective that allows her listeners to engage with the dream as she did, that is, as a viewer. It is a way of making the subjective and intimate vision of the dream into an objective viewing experience to be shared among an audience.

In order to round out the discussion of the passive forms of *videre* in dream descriptions, let me turn to an example from Ovid in which a contrast between active and passive verbs suggests the different nuances of the active and passive

voices. In book 9 of the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid recounts the story of Telethusa, who defies her husband's commands to kill their newborn daughter and instead raises her as a boy named Iphis.³⁵ Just before she is about to give birth, the goddess Isis appears with an entourage to Telethusa and tells her to raise the child regardless of its sex. Ovid describes Telethusa's dream vision of Isis in lines 686–88: "cum medio noctis spatio sub imagine somni / Inachis ante torum, pompa comitata sacrorum, / aut stetit aut visa est" ("when at midnight, in a dream, Isis either stood or seemed to stand before her bed attended by a retinue of sacred beings"). The distinction between the active *stetit* and the passive *visa est* [*stare*] suggests the difference between epiphany and dream. But by analogy with the use of *visus* in other dream descriptions, *visa est* here also suggests Telethusa's difficulty in distinguishing between reality and appearance in her distraught state.

The ambiguity between perception and illusion is reinforced later when Isis addresses the sleeping Telethusa. Ovid prefaces Isis's speech as follows: "tum velut excussam somno et manifesta videntem / sic adfata dea est" ("then the goddess addressed her thus, as though Telethusa were awake and seeing things right before her eyes," lines 695–96). Following temporally upon the perfect-tense phrase "excussam somno," the active participle *videntem* must imply the type of seeing that occurs while awake, as distinct from the deceptive type of viewing that takes place while dreaming. This complex simile blurs the lines between what is actually occurring (Telethusa is dreaming) and the impact of her dream upon her (it is so powerful that she will respond to it as though it were something she had seen while awake). In a way, the comparison resolves the ambiguity of "aut stetit aut visa est," for the lines indicate that the vision of Isis and her message were so clear that Telethusa would not dare dismiss them as irrelevant upon actually waking. Later, when Telethusa does wake up encouraged by the experience and message of her dream, she refers to the dream as *visa* ("things seen"): "laeta toro surgit purasque ad sidera supplex / cressa manus tollens, rata sint sua visa, precatur" ("she rose from the bed happy, and raising her pure hands to the stars as a suppliant, the Cretan woman prayed that her dreams might come to pass," lines 702–3). Despite the fact that Isis's words will hold sway over Telethusa's actions, it is the appearance of Isis that marks the dream's indelibility.

Vision and Appearance in Ekphrasis

As with dream description, ekphrasis too revels in the disjunction between describing what the viewer of a work of visual art sees during the experience of looking and his or her perspective on the scene once engaged in recalling the experience of looking. To examine one explicit link between dream description

and ekphrasis, let us return to the *Aeneid*, and specifically to the ekphrasis of Aeneas's shield in book 8. The verb *videbatur* (8.707) is used only once by Vergil in the shield ekphrasis, but its use is significant, as it is the only use of a passive verb to describe a viewer's perspective on the shield's images.³⁶ Of the other verbs of perception used in the ekphrasis—*aspiceres* (650), *cernere erat* (676), and *videres* (676)—two address the viewer of the shield directly in the second person singular, while the third is impersonal.³⁷ Among other individual points of interest, each of these cases is significant for collapsing the distance between Aeneas, the immediate viewer of the shield, and the reader of the poem, who is imagining the shield's images in his or her mind's eye while reading the description.

References to viewing increase as we approach the scene of the Battle of Actium, the culmination of the narrative on the shield and the center point of the physical object itself. In line 676, for example, Vergil refers twice to viewing, first with *cernere erat* and then with the active voice of the verb *videre* (*videres*), used to draw attention to the resplendence of the fleet arrayed at the beginning of the battle: "in medio classis aeratas, Actia bella, / cernere erat totumque instructo Marte videres / fervere Leucaten auroque effulgere fluctus" ("In the middle could be seen bronze ships, the Battle of Actium, and you could see all of Leucate swarming in preparation for war and the waves resplendent with gold," lines 675–77). The phrase *auro effulgere* (and the verb *fervere*, to some extent) communicates the brilliant appearance of the ships in the water achieved by Vulcan's expert craftsmanship. Reference to the act of seeing the image of the bronze ships (*aeratas classis*) casting a golden glow on the waves ("*auroque effulgere fluctus*") enhances the reader's appreciation of both the actual metals of the ships represented and the metals used by Vulcan on the shield to represent them. As with its counterpart *cernere erat*, the verb *videres* directs the reader's attention to specific details of the shield's composition. This type of viewing experience can be contrasted with that described by the counterpart usage of *videre* in the passive voice at the end of the description of the Battle of Actium.

The passive voice of *videre* (*videbatur*) occurs toward the end of the ekphrasis at a decisive point in the battle scene. Cleopatra has been routed and is shown trying one last time to set sail, this time in retreat. Vergil describes the scene: "*ipsa videbatur ventis regina vocatis / vela dare et laxos iam iamque immittere funis*" ("the queen herself, having called on the winds, was seen [seemed] to spread her sails and now—even now—to let out the slackened ropes," lines 707–8). Why does Vergil use the passive here? The verb *videbatur* has various possible connotations. As Michael Putnam observes, by making Cleopatra, the verb's subject, an object of vision, the verb does double duty.³⁸ The Egyptian queen is seen both within the context of the shield, by her comrades, as signaling the retreat and

upon the shield, by the viewer of the ekphrasis (Aeneas) and the reader of the poem, performing this action. All eyes are on her as she admits defeat and brings the conflict to a close.

The verb *videbatur* differs from the other verbs of viewing (*aspiceres, videres*) in the shield description because its subject is a character on the shield. As with the impersonal phrase *cernere erat* in line 676, *videbatur* refers both to visual perception at the level of the narrative and to viewing by external viewers of the shield without directly addressing the reader. But the nuances of *videbatur* extend even beyond this dichotomy precisely because of the verb's multiple meanings. It could simply mean that Cleopatra "was seen (by all possible viewers)" doing the actions described: that is, that viewers "saw" her spreading her sails and slackening the ropes. But given the fact that the verb is used with complementary infinitives describing motion, an impossibility on the static surface of the shield, it could also reveal the narrator's hesitance to vouch for his interpretation of Cleopatra's action. Taken this way, the verb reveals something deceptive about the appearance of this image—namely, that Cleopatra "seemed" to the narrator and to all viewers to be performing these (impossible) actions. Thus *videbatur* could also refer to the optical illusion conveyed by the representation of movement in this medium, a phenomenon familiar from the experience of dreaming.

Putnam goes on to observe that *iam iamque* reinforces the double function of *videbatur* in that it too could be taken to refer both to Cleopatra's action within the narrative ("in the withdrawal after Actium, as we yield to Virgil's narrative mode, she is in the act of slackening the halyards"), and to the context on which this action appears—the metal shield ("on the shield she appears now, even now, on the verge of action which is to say seeming, through Vulcan's brilliance, nearly capable of carrying out such a task").³⁹ C. J. Fordyce takes the phrase *iam iamque* to mean "just in the act of," implying an "action so imminent that it seems to have happened."⁴⁰ Vulcan's skill has created a gesture or posture so suggestive that the viewer believes he is actually seeing the action that should follow from it. With the combination of *videbatur* and *iam iamque*, Vergil catches the viewer of the shield and the reader of the ekphrasis in a moment that hovers between immersion in and detachment from the action described in the scene. This straddling should remind us of that of the narrator of a dream, who must negotiate between experience and commentary in his or her description of the experience.

Vergil's use of *videbatur* in the ekphrasis of the shield is unique among the ekphrases of the *Aeneid*. Vergil does, however, use *videntur* immediately *after* his ekphrasis of the murals at Juno's temple in Carthage in book 1 (lines 456–93). This instance of the verb is worth considering in conjunction with our discussion of the shield. Let us turn to its context. The ekphrasis of the murals ends with an image

of Penthesilea leading the Amazons in battle in lines 490–93. The final word of the ekphrasis, *virgo*, singles out Penthesilea as the last image seen by the viewer. At lines 494–95, Vergil returns to the outer narrative with a description of Aeneas’s reaction to what he has seen. This transitional couplet is followed by a description of the approach of Dido with a group of Carthaginians (496–97). Like Penthesilea, Dido is with a group, but she is singled out as *regina* in line 496. The proximity of the descriptions of the fearless Amazon warrior and the beautiful queen of Carthage suggests for the reader a comparison between the two women. As Putnam observes of the transition between Penthesilea and Dido, “The energy only implicit in the inert picture suddenly is activated as it works its way into the epic tale itself. Penthesilea, envisioned fighting for Troy in the painting’s graphic present, yields to Dido alive and right before us in all her bravery.”⁴¹ Putnam points out Vergil’s deft transition from ekphrasis to outer narrative by way of the connection between Penthesilea and Dido, but perhaps because the connection is so compelling on its own, he neglects to mention the transitional lines (494–95), which are an important hinge between image and reality.

Lines 494–95 contain a striking couplet that connects the image of Penthesilea and the appearance of Dido: “haec dum Dardanio Aeneae miranda videntur / dum stupet obtutuque haeret defixus in uno” (“while these wondrous images appear to Trojan Aeneas, while he is stunned and stands transfixed in one gaze,” lines 494–95). R. G. Austin comments on the verb *videntur*: “It is probably passive (‘are seen in all their wonder’), as Conington takes it, rather than ‘seem’ (as Conway).”⁴² Austin’s criticism illustrates precisely the complexity of *videre* in the passive: it refers both to sight and to impression. As I have shown, however, the verb in the passive generally denotes appearance from the perspective of the viewer, as in a dream; while the mural’s images are, of course, “seen” by Aeneas, I suggest that the line also refers to his impression of their appearance: that is, they seemed “wondrous” (*miranda*) from his perspective. There are many reasons why the images of the murals seem “wondrous,” in some way more impressive to Aeneas than any other images might have been. These reasons include their realistic depiction of traumatic events, their emotional impact upon him, and their apparent suggestion that the Carthaginians may be sympathetic to his plight. But it is important to note the additional resonances of *videntur* in its context. Lines 494–95 mark a shift from viewing a represented female warrior (Penthesilea) to viewing the real queen (Dido), as the *dum* clauses of lines 494 and 495–97 suggest the simultaneity of Aeneas’s gaze at the paintings and Dido’s approach. The type of seeing described by *videntur*, as we know from dream descriptions, is characterized by a blurring of the division between illusion and reality. By using the passive verb *videntur* to describe Aeneas’s experience at this critical moment, Vergil privileges his reaction

to viewing over his action as a viewer. The use of this verb in this context suggests a type of viewing experience that will allow Aeneas as viewer to combine the image of Penthesilea with the vision of Dido.

In addition to characterizing his particular mode of viewing at this transitional moment, the passive verb *videntur* forms a ring composition with the active verbs *videt* and *videbat* that began the ekphrasis. Many have observed the significance of the opening lines of the ekphrasis, in particular their suggestion of Aeneas's sympathetic interpretation of the images he sees.⁴³ Let us turn to these for a moment. It is not my intention here to reiterate the arguments about the accuracy of Aeneas's reading of the scenes in the murals; rather, I simply wish to note that these lines demonstrate his subjectivity specifically by drawing attention twice to his role as viewer of the murals. In line 456 he begins to view the scenes depicted on the murals ("videt Iliacas ex ordine pugnas").⁴⁴ Vergil introduces the specific scenes there ten lines later as an explication of Aeneas's remarks to Achates about their emotional impact: "namque videbat uti bellantes Pergama circum / hac fugerent Grai, premeret Troiana iuventus" ("for he saw how here the Greeks, fighting around Troy, were fleeing, pursued by the Trojan youth," lines 466–67). The verb *videbat* recalls the earlier use of *videt* (line 456) and reinforces the emphasis upon vision in the scene, while hinting that Aeneas's vision is not objective. But the shift from active to passive forms of the verb across the span of the ekphrasis also points out how Aeneas's viewing experience has changed as he looks at the images.

Considering the common use of *videre* in the passive in dream descriptions (and its uncommon use in ekphrasis), I suggest that Vergil marks this moment of viewing as dreamlike. While Aeneas is still caught by the illusionism of the paintings, reacting to them as though to a dream of the past, Dido appears spontaneously, as though a visitor to Aeneas's dream. At the moment of his viewing, Dido is both real and unreal, as are the paintings and as is a dream figure. The fact that Vergil follows her appearance immediately with a simile comparing her to Diana (lines 498–502) extends the dominance of imagery over narrative and also contributes to the reader's impression of Aeneas's protracted visual reverie. This confluence of painted image and simile at the moment of Aeneas's actual vision of Dido suggests a layered visual experience that in many ways resembles a dream.

The Dreams and Dreamers of Roman Elegy

Let us now turn to an example from elegy in which we see a similar layering of visual experiences, but this time in an actual dream narrative. Consider the opening lines from Ovid, *Amores* 3.5:⁴⁵

nox erat, et somnus lassos submisit ocellos;
terruerunt animum talia visa meum:
colle sub aprico creberimus ilice lucus
stabat, et in ramis multa latebat avis.
area gramineo suberat viridissima prato,
umida de guttis lene sonantis aquae.
ipse sub arboreis vitabam frondibus aestum,
fronde sub arborea sed tamen aestus erat.
ecce, petens variis inmixtas floribus herbas
constitit ante oculos candida vacca meos,
candidior nivibus, tunc cum cecidere recentes,
in liquidas nondum quas mora vertit aquas,
candidior, quod adhuc spumis stridentibus albet
et modo siccata, lacte, reliquit ovem.

[It was nighttime, and sleep weighed down my exhausted eyes; the following visions terrified my soul. At the foot of a sunny hill stood a grove crowded with Ilex trees, and many a bird hid in their branches. An emerald field lay at the end of a grassy meadow, glistening with drops from a gently sounding stream. I was trying to escape the heat in the shade of the leafy trees, but the heat found me there nonetheless. Look! A white cow seeking grasses mixed in with different flowers stood before my eyes. She was whiter than snow when it has just fallen, which delay has not yet turned into droplets of water; whiter than milk that, with still hissing foam, whitens after leaving the sheep just drained dry.]

With the lines above, the narrator of the poem begins his vivid account of a dream. While the content of the dream is, of course, of great interest to the reader of this poem, of equal interest and importance to our appreciation of the poem is the manner in which the dream is described. By dwelling upon the details of a sylvan landscape and offering a multifaceted description of the brilliant white cow that occupies it, the narrator of the dream immerses the dreamer into this dream-*scape* gradually. In so doing, he invites the poem's readers to experience the dream sensually as they read. References to sound (the stream and the hissing milk, lines 6 and 13) and the inescapable heat (lines 7–8) help to lend a sensual immediacy, but the primary sense through which the experience of this dream is communicated is that of sight. Not only is this dream experience characterized as a vision (*visa*, "things seen," in line 2), but its re-creation is sustained through persistent emphasis upon the dream as a specifically visual experience. Brief examination of

the multiple ways in which the narrator foregrounds vision and the experience of viewing in this poem, and thus engages the reader of his poem not just as a reader but as a viewer of his dream, will allow us to reflect upon some of the issues touched upon earlier in this chapter and will serve to introduce the central focus of this book's investigation into the dream narratives of the Roman elegiac poets.

After lingering for twelve lines (lines 3–14) on the landscape and the cow, the narrator reveals the remainder of his dream in the subsequent sixteen lines: a bull grazes beside the cow and eventually falls asleep; a crow flies into the scene and pecks at the cow's breast, leaving a livid mark; the cow leaves her mate to join other bulls in a faraway pasture. At this point, now more than halfway through the poem, the narrator abruptly addresses an interpreter, asking him to decode this dream. Without hesitation, the interpreter reveals the meaning of the dream's images, and the poem closes with a brief description of the narrator's extreme physical reaction to this unwelcome news.

Amores 3.5 is a fascinating poem for many reasons. From the outset, the reader is aware that what is about to be revealed contains a reminiscence charged with the emotional intensity of fear, as the narrator prefaces his dream narration with the verb *terruerunt* (line 2). Indeed, the dream is laced with erotically tinged elements of suspense and violence. Furthermore, the poem's bipartite structure of dream narration followed by interpretation immediately satisfies the reader's impulse to decode the dream's meaning and identify its relevance to the dreamer. The poem's delayed revelation of the context for the dream's narration—the fact that the narrator is recounting it to an interpreter from whom he seeks help—makes it unique among Ovid's poetry, as Jennifer Ingleheart and Katharine Radice note in their commentary on the poem.⁴⁶

The unusual structure of the poem has also been cited in the well-documented debate about its authenticity. Beyond being uncharacteristic for Ovid, its balanced structure of dream narration and interpretation marks this dream poem as substantively different from the other dreams of the elegiac corpus.⁴⁷ J. C. McKeown cites as a central reason to doubt Ovidian authorship the fact that it “lacks the creative reworking of Tibullus and Propertius,” which he sees as the defining characteristic of Ovid's *Amores*.⁴⁸ While this poem's response to its predecessors may fairly be called “uncreative,” it is certainly worth noting several features that it does share with the other poems of Roman elegy. After all, if the poem's author was not Ovid himself, he was nevertheless well versed in the elegiac poetry of the Augustan age and attuned to the style and themes of Ovid and his predecessors, even if heavy-handed and selective in his application of these, as McKeown has suggested.⁴⁹ At the very least, as Ingleheart and Radice have argued in their commentary, we can use the unsettled controversy over the poem's authenticity as an opportunity to

“open up valuable discussions about the characteristic features of Ovidian poetry.”⁵⁰ Regardless of its idiosyncrasies, the poem offers us a valuable opportunity for assessing the characteristic features of elegiac dream poems.

From the opening lines of *Amores* 3.5, we learn that the dream is set in a *locus amoenus*, an idyllic spot within a natural landscape filled with elements familiar from poetic descriptions of such places, an example of which we see in the opening of *Amores* 3.1.⁵¹ But unlike its predecessor, although the scenes they describe are similar, the scene in 3.5 contains features that specifically highlight the act of viewing, a characteristic typical of the landscape descriptions of the *Metamorphoses*, as Stephen Hinds has noted.⁵² For example, the dreamer is not only present in the dream as an actor vainly seeking shade from the heat (“ipse . . . vitabam,” line 7), but his visual perspective also controls the reader’s experience of the dream. By relegating himself to a marginal position away from the heat that dominates the landscape, although this ultimately proves fruitless, the narrator detaches himself from the central action of the dream. The language of lines 9 and 10 recalls Vergil’s description of Aeneas’s dream of Hector in *Aeneid* 2 (“in somnis, ecce, ante oculos maestissimus Hector / visus adesse mihi largosque effundere fletus,” 270–71). The interjection *ecce* in line 9, which provides the hinge between the description of the setting and that of the action of the dream, abruptly compels the reader to spy the cow as she walks into the scene, as though both reader and narrator are witnessing this action together and for the first time. The prepositional phrase “ante oculos meos” (line 10) reinforces the narrator’s role as viewer rather than participant in the action of the scene. This phrase suggests that the action of the dream unfolds for the dreamer’s exclusive spectatorship, and it reminds the reader that his or her access to the information provided comes through the dreamer’s personal visual perspective.

In a footnote to her analysis of *Amores* 3.5, Christine Walde compares the poet’s dream narration with the description of a picture (*Bildbeschreibung*).⁵³ Certainly the poem’s opening scene of the *locus amoenus* appears like a tableau before the dreamer’s eyes, looming up after a mere couplet of introduction. Devoid of movement or action, the description of lines 3–6 has the static feel of a painted landscape. As Walde suggests in the same note, the opening description also has a cinematic quality (“in fast filmischer Weise”). Indeed the reader “zooms” into the scene, to borrow a term from cinematography, as the narration guides the reader’s engagement with the setting through a process of gradual immersion. The reader enters the scene by lighting out from a distant hilltop, then focusing in on individual features of the landscape: the meadow, then the trees and the water source, until finally the dreamer becomes a part of the image, located under a tree, and the

reader, along with him, is brought into the dream. It is at this point that the action of the dream begins.

The poet's use of the passive participle *visa* ("things seen") in line 2 to refer to the content of the dream he is about to reveal immediately suggests the visual nature of the dream.⁵⁴ The participle *visa* may recall for us the standard idiom for introducing messenger dreams with the passive participle of *videre* plus an infinitive, such as we see in Aeneas's exclamation that Hector seemed/appeared to stand before him ("maestissimus Hector / visus adesse mihi largosque effundere fletus," 2.270–71). In *Amores* 3.5, the substantive use of the participle suggests the series of images and characters that will make up the episodes to come, rather than the appearance of one central figure. And, in fact, the events of the dream are recounted with active verbs.

Later in the poem, however, the poet does use the standard idiom to describe the bull, the cow's companion in the dream:

taurus erat comes huic, feliciter ille maritus,	15
cumque sua teneram coniuge pressit humum.	
dum iacet et lente revocatas ruminat herbas	
atque iterum pasto pascitur ante cibo,	
visus erat, somno vires adimente ferendi,	
cornigerum terra deposuisse caput.	20

[She had a bull as a companion, happy to be her husband, and he pressed the tender ground next to his wife. While he lay and slowly chewed the cud and ate again what had been his previous meal, he seemed to place his horned head on the ground, as sleep made him unable to hold his head up.]

The bull's appearance and subsequent actions are described with active and "middle-voice" verbs (*erat*, *pressit*, *iacet*, *ruminat*, *pascitur*, lines 15–18). The shift in construction to describe the action in lines 19–20 ("*visus erat* . . . *deposuisse*"), however, suggests that the narrator is here describing something he is hesitant to vouch for. As with the earlier examples from Ennius and Vergil, the passive construction inserts the perspective of the waking narrator into the narrative of the dream. The bull *seemed*, from the perspective of the narrator, to lower his head to the ground. Perhaps the shift to the passive construction suggests that there is some ambiguity about the bull's action from the vantage point of the internal viewer: is he sleeping or merely resting? Or perhaps the narrator is reflecting upon

the disjunction so common in dreams: is it strange that the bull went so abruptly from chewing cud to sleeping, as the pluperfect tense of *visus erat* might indicate? Is he perhaps hinting that there might be a cause more sinister than sleep behind the bull's exhaustion? Is the dreamer balking a bit because this is a self-reflexive moment? After all, it is soon going to be revealed that the bull represents him, and he is in fact asleep at the moment that he sees "himself" falling asleep. In any case, by using the verb *visus erat* in line 19, the narrator singles out this action as different from the rest of the narrative that makes up the collective *visa* of the dream.

By referring to the presence and potency of these *visa* specifically when his eyes are closed and unable to see ("somnus lassos submisit ocellos"), the narrator identifies the paradox inherent in dreaming: the ability to engage in a type of viewing that occurs internally and is distinct from waking, external seeing. It is at the very point when the dreamer's eyes, the sense organs with which he sees while awake, are disabled that he is able to see clearly the images of his dream. The poem's first couplet thus creates an implicit contrast between active seeing (what we do when our eyes are open) and passive seeing (what we do while we sleep and dream images appear to us). But when the narrator claims in line 10 that the cow stood "ante oculos meos," the near-repetition of the word *ocellos* from the first line calls into question the submission of his eyes in sleep, and thus creates a paradox. The paradox articulated in the poem's first couplet—that the narrator was terrified by "visions" while his eyes were closed—is reinforced by this reference to his eyes in the context of the dream.

This paradox of vision is echoed in the poem's final couplet, where the narrator describes his reaction to the dream interpreter's unwelcome prediction of his lover's infidelity: "gelido mihi sanguis ab ore / fugit, et ante oculos nox stetit alta meos" ("the blood drained from my frozen face, and before my eyes stood deep night," lines 45–46). Many have noted that the poem's final couplet recalls the poem's opening line with its repetition of *nox* and use of *oculos*, a slight variation on *ocellos*.⁵⁵ As Ingleheart and Radice suggest, the poem's ring composition also contains a pun on the word *nox*. In their interpretation, the second use of *nox* describes figuratively the blackout that occurs when the narrator faints upon hearing the interpreter's words: "Ovid's nighttime dream has caused a metaphorical night to overwhelm him as he fears for his relationship with his mistress."⁵⁶ Ironically, the narrator slips into darkness at the very moment when he has achieved a clear perspective on his dream, thanks to the interpreter's explanation. This pun points out the incongruity of the situation the narrator describes: the narrator's loss of vision is paradoxically described in terms of a vision of blackness standing before his eyes. By juxtaposing the nouns *oculos* and *nox*, the poet suggests a strong connection between fainting and "seeing" blackness. Less obvious, perhaps,

but equally noteworthy is the closing line's close repetition of line 10, with *stetit* recalling *constitit*, and the color adjective *candida* replaced in the same line position by *nox*, which (especially taken with *alta*) thus suggests the opposite of *candida*, darkness, a "color" also perceived by sight. The narrator is seeing and not seeing at the same time.

In addition to its verbal echo, the ambiguous image at the poem's end reinforces the paradox suggested by its opening couplet. The blackness standing before the open eyes (*oculos*) of the narrator at the end of the poem evokes the image of his eyes (*ocellos*) forced closed by sleep in the poem's opening line, just as the black void with which the poem ends marks a strong contrast with the preceding vivid images of the dream and its interpretation. For the first half of the poem, sleep was a space for "seeing" the dream's symbols, despite the fact that the narrator's eyes were closed; when he opens his eyes and confronts the implications of his dream for his waking life, the narrator is unable to see anything but darkness. The striking contrast between the black space (*nox alta*) of his swoon and the images (*visa*) of his dream both reinforces the intensity of the dream visions and reminds us of the distinction between waking vision and dream vision.

In *Institutio Oratoria* 6.2.31–32, the rhetorician Quintilian describes the process of an orator's *phantasia* (mental image), suggesting that the orator should envision for himself (i.e., internally) the scene of a murder, including graphic and dynamic images of the murderer and his victim, in order to convey the scene to his listeners and thereby convince them of his case. The success of this process involves allowing the jurors to stand in his place as viewers of the scene and to be affected emotionally as witnesses to the scene. At 6.2.32, Quintilian describes the process of translating *phantasia* from image to word:

Insequitur ἐνάργεια, quae a Cicerone illustratio et evidentia nominatur, quae non tam dicere videtur quam ostendere; et adfectus non aliter, quam si rebus ipsis intersimus, sequentur.

[This gives rise to ἐνάργεια, which Cicero calls *illustratio* and *evidentia*, by which we seem to show what happened rather than to tell it; and this gives rise to the same emotions as if we were present at the event itself.⁵⁷]

Enargeia enables the speaker to transfer his mental image (*phantasia*) to his listener. The particularly visual quality of *enargeia* is underscored by Cicero's translation of the term using the Latin noun *evidentia* (from *videre*). The practice of making listeners into viewers in order to affect their emotions is not exclusive to the realm of rhetoric; since antiquity, in fact, it has been commonly accepted that

poets too employed such techniques with the goal of engaging their readers as though viewers.⁵⁸

The opening couplet of *Amores* 3.5 illustrates one way in which a poet can deploy *enargeia* to convert his reader's engagement to that of a viewer. Without explicitly addressing the reader, the narrator makes clear that he intends to transform the dream from private experience to shared information. In these lines the reader is immediately made aware of the personal relevance of the dream by the narrator's reference to its terrifying effect on him ("terruerunt animum talia visa meum," line 2). Unbeknown to the reader, the terror stems both from the images of the dream and from the implications revealed by its interpretation. The abrupt transition between introduction and narration also adds a sense of urgency to the account, as though the narrator had experienced the dream recently. Eschewing description of the circumstances of the dream and avoiding any hint at why the images might have been terrifying, the narrator launches into the dream. The illusion of being the sole recipient of the dream narration is, of course, shattered when the reader comes to the second part of the poem, and in fact this part throws into relief the deception of immediacy and intimacy created by the poem's first section.

Additional features heighten the reader's experience of the dream as particularly visual by emphasizing the act of viewing within the dream. One is the poet's repeated use of color words, such as the adjective *viridissima* to describe the meadow (line 5, echoed by *viridi* to describe the ground in line 22) and the adjectives *candida* (line 10) and *candidior* (lines 11 and 13), and later *niveae* (line 23) to describe the cow.⁵⁹ To be sure, *candida* and its comparative *candidior* focus the reader's attention upon the appearance of the cow ("candida vacca," line 10), but they go beyond this role to suggest a visual intensity within the scene, merely by their repetition. The cow's whiteness is enhanced, perhaps, by its contrast with the mixed flowers and grass against which it stands ("variis inmixtas floribus herbas," line 9).⁶⁰ Furthermore, *candidus* carries the primary meanings of "bright" or "radiant" in addition to "white."⁶¹ Thus the repetition of the word three times implies not only that the cow's whiteness is distinctive, but also that it is so bright as to exclude recognition of other features within the dreamscape, all of which are ignored for the five lines devoted to the description of the cow (lines 10–14). As the viewer in the dream was momentarily transfixed by the brilliant appearance of the cow, so too the reader is arrested in a moment of viewing while the narration of the dream's action is delayed.

In the context of a dream, a realm in which the dreamer imagines that he sees real objects from the external world, colors connect the features of the dreamscape to their counterparts in real life by creating realism. In the context of a dream

narration, the narrator uses color words to suggest a close resemblance between the objects he describes and their counterparts in nature. In so doing, I would suggest, the narrator brings to the reader's mind media of visual art such as painting and textiles, in which the use of color is essential for representing elements from the natural world.⁶² The narrator's exclusive focus upon the cow's color challenges the reader to think about the way in which color in particular enables a work of visual art to achieve realism in its depiction.⁶³ On the one hand, colors are basic and universally recognizable features of the perceivable world, so their mention enhances the believability of a description.⁶⁴ On the other hand, when re-created by pigment for the purpose of representation in painting, colors were agents of deception, tools used by painters to achieve an approximation of nature. This is a subject to which Pliny the Elder devotes substantial attention in his discussion of pigment.⁶⁵

Color words isolate their referents by allowing one feature of what is being described to stand out against its context, thus eliminating other elements from the scene. In addition, color words momentarily still the narrative in which they appear by diverting attention to individual features. The visual intensity created by repeated reference to the cow's whiteness in line 10 is compounded by the two extended similes that follow in lines 11–14. While the comparisons to snow and milk mark the narrator's attempt to convey the brilliance of the cow's color by comparing it to substances that are synonymous with whiteness, they also add a new dimension to our understanding of the whiteness. Specifically, the snow and the milk are described in their most pure state, right at the moment before metamorphosis. The snow is at its peak of whiteness because it has not yet (*nondum*) turned to water, while the milk is at its peak of whiteness because it has recently (*modo*) been expressed from the sheep. Both liquids are caught in a state of temporary brilliance, and thus, in addition to the visual image created for us by the similes, we are left with the impression of a photographic snapshot taken on the brink of an otherwise transient moment.

Barbara Weiden Boyd has studied the extended similes of the *Amores*, demonstrating Ovid's innovative use of this poetic device, most closely associated with Homer and the epic poets, but used also by Ovid's predecessor Propertius.⁶⁶ As Boyd has observed, "The extended simile, by virtue of its ability to bring every detail into painstaking focus while offering a multiplicity of alternative visions, is a means to both emphasize and undermine visual realism."⁶⁷ Boyd does not treat poem 3.5 in her discussion, but I think that we can profitably analyze the similes of 3.5 in terms of their relationship to the reader's understanding of realism in the poem. This can be approached in two ways. First of all, on the narrative level, the similes of the snow and the milk serve to move the reader's attention away from

the image of the cow, while heightening his or her awareness of its whiteness. Furthermore, the similes of *Amores* 3.5 have a self-conscious quality. Like the color words themselves, the similes play a role in highlighting for the reader that the dream is merely a representation of the objects it depicts, and thus an illusion of them. With the similes, the dream's narrator comments upon his own perception of the color of the cow while dreaming. In providing for the reader alternative modes for visualizing the cow through the similes, the poet forges a connection between the dream description and the simile itself, as both provide alternative images for their referents. For, later in the poem, it will be revealed that the cow is in fact itself a representation of the narrator's (human) lover in the context of the dream. This connection is reinforced when the interpreter of the dream identifies it as a symbol for the narrator's lover and makes explicit reference to its white color ("vacca puella tua est—aptus color ille puellae," line 37), thus recalling the similes that amplified the cow's color.

If the similes of the poem suggest a critique of the dream's images from the perspective of one who has awoken, the second part of the poem provides a revision of the meaning of these dream images from the perspective of one who has not experienced them in sleep. The final critique of the dream experience comes from the dream interpreter, the hidden addressee of the poem, whose presence has been concealed until line 31. The dream's interpretation draws attention to the poem's visual quality by forcing both dreamer and reader to reconsider the dream's images not merely as representations of elements of the waking world, but as symbols for elements of the dreamer's waking life.

The couplet in lines 31–32 forms the pivot point in the poem: "Dic age, nocturnae, quicumque es, imaginis augur, / Si quid habent veri, visa quid ista ferant" ("Come, tell me, interpreter of the nighttime image, whoever you are, what those images mean, if they hold any truth"). With no forewarning that the dream description has ended, the narrator addresses the *augur imaginis*, who in turn reveals the meaning of the dream's images. He interprets the animals as symbols for people from the narrator's waking life: the bull stands in for the narrator; the heifer is his *puella*; the crow is a meddlesome *lena*, who induces the *puella* to leave the narrator for another lover (represented by the group of bulls).

One of the most striking anomalies of *Amores* 3.5 is that it supplies us with information rarely found in the dreams of poetry: an explanation of the dream's meaning by an external authority.⁶⁸ The interpreter's pronouncement gives the dream's narration a purpose and a context; in so doing, the address to the interpreter and his response remind us of the presumed dynamics of all dream narrations—namely, that they are articulated for the benefit of a listener, who is always a potential interpreter. Thus *Amores* 3.5 underscores the function of the

dream narration specifically as a mode of communication. In fact, the whole conceit of the poem rests upon its structure as a dialogue (as opposed to a monologue) whose goal is interpretation by a listener. Until the interpreter is addressed in line 31, the reader must assume that he or she is the sole recipient of the narration, as in most of the other elegies, and thus the revelation disturbs the illusion of the reader's intimacy with the narrator. On the other hand, as Walde has suggested, the dream interpreter in this poem is the internal counterpart to the learned reader of elegiac poetry.⁶⁹ In his or her own role as a kind of "interpreter" of the dream, the learned reader is able to grasp the particular relevance of the dream's images for the narrator, not because of any knowledge of dream interpretation, but because he or she is familiar with the characters and the narrator's concerns from prior reading of the *Amores*. Thus this poem, according to Walde, confirms the similarity between the processes of literary criticism and dream interpretation.

By explicitly differentiating between dream description and dream interpretation, this poem opens up a space for the poem's readers to reflect upon the dream as we "re-view" it through the interpreter's explication of its meaning. Perhaps most obviously, the process of interpretation forces the reader to take stock of the dream's symbolism, but in so doing, it also allows us as readers a chance to reconsider many other aspects of the dream that make it compelling as a dream experience rather than as just a coded message. After all, it is the dream's intensity that increases the dreamer's (and the reader's) investment in the experience and subsequent willingness to accept the interpreter's definitive pronouncement. In the context of *Amores* 3.5, that interpretation bestows relevance upon the dream retrospectively and thus legitimizes it as a dream experience, but my concern in the preceding analysis has been with the dream narration itself: what makes the dream's recounting compelling *for the reader*, the counterpart of the interpreter, as an account of a dream experience? The answer, I have proposed, lies in identifying the modes through which the narrator engages the poem's reader as a viewer in the narration of his dream.

At the end of *Amores* 3.5, the reader is left with a palimpsest of images: the fresh snow and the bubbling milk of the similes overlay the image of the pure white cow, while the cow is a surrogate for the lover, whose abstract image is superimposed above all of these through the interpreter's revelation. The similes and other modes of commentary upon the experience of vision within the dream description, such as the paradox of seeing with closed eyes from the first couplet and the use of *visus erat* to describe appearance, prepare the reader for the interpretation of the dream: that the dream is itself a representation of the dynamics of an external reality. The concatenation of images in the dream description of *Amores* 3.5 is also a powerful reminder of not just what the dreamer has witnessed in his

dream, but how his narration of this experience has engendered a process of visualization for the reader of the poem. Through this process, the reader has taken the point of view of the dreamer and, with the aid of the narrator's reflection upon the dream in his telling, has, likewise, "seen" the images of the dream.

Conclusion

This chapter has compared several examples of the language used in the fictional dream descriptions of Latin poetry, ranging from Ennius to Ovid. My discussion has centered upon the verb *videre*, used in the passive voice to refer not only to the visibility of apparitions in dreams, but also to the dreamer's perception of the appearance of people or images in dreams that, upon waking, are called into question. I have attempted to ground this semantic discussion in the theories of vision espoused by the Epicurean philosopher Lucretius and also in a context related to dreams: ekphrasis of a work of visual art.

Concluding with a detailed analysis of *Amores* 3.5, I have analyzed the interplay of the poet's uses of the verb *videre*, color words, similes, and references to the experience of looking. This analysis has demonstrated several factors that contribute to the creation of *enargeia* ("vividness") in the dream description, a vital component of the narrator's use of the dream as a mode of communication with the recipient of the dream, whether listener or reader. We shall see in the next chapter how several of these dynamics come into play in Tibullus's description of a dreamlike fantasy, whose images are recalled only to flaunt their irrelevance to his waking reality.



2 Fantasy and Creativity in Tibullus 1.5

Nighttime dreams (*somnia*) are mentioned only three times in Tibullus's poetry and never described in detail.¹ Delia's *saeva somnia*, discussed in greater detail below, are the nightmares that afflict those made vulnerable by illness, and in this sense they are invasive to the mind, as illness is to the body. The invasiveness of dreams is captured by the personification of *somnia* in poem 2.1, where sleep and its attendant dreams are shown to follow the chariot of night as the day comes to an end: "postque venit tacitus furvis circumdatus alis / Somnus et incerto Somnia nigra pede" ("and behind comes silent Sleep wrapped up in his dark wings, followed by black Dreams on uneven step," lines 89–90). Here the description of *Somnia* as dark and moving with wavering steps communicates the ominous and perhaps unpredictable nature of the dreams in store for the sleeper they approach. The noun appears again in 2.6, where Tibullus warns Nemesis against offending the shade of her dead sister, who might in retaliation send *mala somnia* to torment her: "ne tibi neglecti mittant mala somnia manes / maestraque sopitae stet soror ante torum" ("lest the neglected shades send you harmful dreams, and your mournful sister stand before your bed while you sleep," lines 37–38). Here too dreams are external to the dreamer; in this case, dreams are inflicted upon the dreamer in the form of a vision of the dead.

Although evocative in their own right, these mentions of *somnia* are tantalizingly elusive, for while they refer to a familiar aspect of the nature of dreams, they do not reveal any individual content. The lack of nighttime dreams in Tibullus's poetry is countered by the abundance of instances in which the poet exercises his imagination, envisioning places and situations that are fictional alternatives to the circumstances he describes in his poems. Poem 1.5, which describes the poet's attempts to forget his lover, Delia, who has left him for another man despite Tibullus's vigilance during her illness (and his protection against her *saeva somnia*),

is paradigmatic for the interplay between “reality”—that is, the poet’s present circumstances as he articulates them in the poem—and imagined alternatives to this reality.²

This tension between fiction and reality reaches its peak with the poet’s extended vision of a happy life with Delia in poem 1.5. A close reading of the poem with particular attention to this dreamlike episode occupies the current chapter. By explicitly appropriating the term “dream” from those who use it casually to describe this episode, this chapter seeks to reconsider this passage specifically in terms of its close relationship with the dreams of elegiac poetry.

Dream and Fantasy in Tibullus

Although no actual nighttime dreams are recounted in his poetry, the term “dream” has a long history in scholarship on Tibullus. Most often it has been used figuratively, to describe the jarring quality of temporal or physical disjointedness, or the invasiveness of the poet’s unrealizable fantasies of pastoral existence.³ The specific meaning of Tibullan “dreaminess” has certainly evolved since Jacob van Wageningen linked the dreamlike qualities of Tibullus’s poetry (“Traümerci”) with the poet’s mental illness in an essay of 1913.⁴ The figurative use of the word can be seen in the comments of J. P. Elder, for example, who refers to the “dreamy indistinctiveness” of Tibullus’s pastoral world and then uses the word “dream” multiple times to describe the poet’s imagined escapes from “the reality of life in Rome.”⁵ In Elder’s analogy, then, the dream becomes a metaphor for a fictional and more pleasant alternative reality. Even the “dreams” of Tibullus’s poetry can be subdivided into types, as David F. Bright, who uses the term liberally throughout his critique, indicates when he refers to the poet’s “extended dream” of his funeral at the end of poem 1.1 (lines 59–68) and “the real dream toward which he has been building all the time” of Tibullus and Delia joined together in love (line 69).⁶ Indicative of the staying power of the term’s original meaning is the fact that in his essay of 2008, Benjamin Todd Lee uses the word “dreaminess” without quotation marks (and without explanation) in the essay’s first heading (“On Tibullus’ Dreaminess”), thus suggesting that the implications of this term are now well-known and even standard.⁷

Paul Allen Miller’s work on what he calls the “Tibullan dream text” has provided a welcome corrective to the persistent use of the metaphor of dreaming as a way of simply deriding, ignoring, or underestimating the difficulties of interpreting Tibullus’s poetry.⁸ Using the template of the dream to identify the aspects of Tibullus’s poetry that defy the logic of linear time and narrative, and the tools of psychoanalytic dream interpretation to understand these in context, Miller

establishes the concept of the “dream text” to account for the specific function of the incoherence and disjointedness of Tibullus’s first book.⁹ In particular, Miller sees Tibullus’s complex contradictions as indicative of the poet’s fraught relationship to the context in which he was writing: Rome in the early Augustan age. Miller’s work thus reclaims the term “dream” to describe an essential aspect of Tibullus’s poetics. By defining “the oneiric quality of Tibullan verse,”¹⁰ Miller illuminates for the reader the narrative of desire behind the frequent clashes of *amor*, *rura*, and *militia* in the poems of his first book.

An obvious and oft-cited example of Tibullan “dreaminess,” in both the literal and the metaphorical senses, is the well-known episode in poem 1.5 (lines 21–34) in which the poet imagines a peaceful rural existence with Delia by way of a vision, whose contrast with the poem’s “reality,” the present circumstances of its writing, is made explicit by the poet himself. Despite the fact that the vision expressed in 1.5.21–34 is often referred to as a “dream,” it is not actually a dream in the primary sense of the word, “a series of images, thoughts, and emotions, often with story-like quality, generated by mental activity during sleep,”¹¹ because it does not occur during sleep, nor is it involuntary.¹² Tibullus calls the vision of lines 21–34 *vota*, which can mean “prayers” or “wishes,”¹³ words that the English word “dream” encompasses in its semantic range, so it is easy to see why critics tend to use “dream” to describe this episode. To be sure, the word is often used in conjunction and synonymously with other English words that serve to narrow its meaning in a specific context.¹⁴ As with its English counterpart, the Latin *somnium*, related etymologically to *somnus* (“sleep”), refers primarily to visions that occur during sleep at night (as we have seen in the examples from Tibullus’s poetry above), although it is used in a transferred sense with meanings such as “idle hope” or “delusion.”¹⁵ Although the vision of Tibullus 1.5 is patently not a *somnium*, it is appropriate to consider the “dream” of poem 1.5 in conjunction with the nighttime dreams of the elegiac corpus.

There are compelling reasons for looking ahead from Tibullus 1.5 toward the dream narratives of the other elegiac poets. One such reason is to consider the “dream’s” mode of narration alongside that of actual dreams. To this end, the present chapter examines the poet’s so-called dream in poem 1.5 specifically as a fantasy, a type of vision that, while it expresses a wish for something improbable (as the English word “fantasy” suggests), also exemplifies the ancient rhetorical concept of *phantasia*, a technique for deliberately conjuring in the mind images of things not present to the eye. In this chapter, I demonstrate an important parallel between recounting an internal visual experience, such as a fantasy, and creating *enargeia*, “the quality of language that appeals to the audience’s imagination,”¹⁶ in Ruth Webb’s words. In particular, the analysis presented here seeks to establish

the relationship between creation of the *phantasia* and its expression in words through *enargeia*.

We return to Quintilian for a definition of “fantasy” in its basic sense of envisioning images of things not actually present. In his handbook for rhetorical training, Quintilian defines the Greek term φαντασίαι, which he glosses with the Latin term *visiones*, as follows:

quas φαντασίας Graeci vocant (nos sane visiones apellemus), per quas imagines rerum absentium ita repraesentantur animo, ut eas cernere oculis ac praesentes habere videamur, has quisquis bene ceperit, is erit in adfectibus potentissimus. [has] Quidam dicunt ἐϋφαντασίωτον, qui sibi res voces actus secundum verum optime finget. (*Inst. Orat.* 6.2.29–30)¹⁷

[What the Greeks call *phantasiai* (we would call them *visiones*, if you will) are the means by which images of absent things are represented to the mind in such a way that we seem to see them with our eyes and to be in their presence. Whoever has mastery of them will have a powerful effect on the emotions. Some people say that this type of man who can imagine in himself things, words, and deeds well and in accordance with truth is “good at imagining” (*euphantasiōtos*).¹⁸]

The process Quintilian describes in these lines is similar to what is meant by the English word “imagination”—that is, creating an image in the mind through an act of representing what is not actually there. Despite this similarity between the two processes, however, the goals of the two acts are different. Whereas the word “imagination” connotes solely an internal mental process, *phantasia* is something an orator will engage in as preparation for appealing to the emotions of his listeners by bringing his imagined scene “before the eyes” of his audience. Contrasting *phantasia* with common and spontaneous forms of hallucination (*animi vitium*), such as indulging vain hopes (*spes inanes*) and daydreaming (*somnia vigilantium*), Quintilian presents *phantasia* as a “controlled and conscious process of visualization.”¹⁹ This deliberate rather than involuntary process is precisely what characterizes Tibullus’s fantasy, as we shall see from his description of the circumstances surrounding its creation.

Poem 1.5

Poem 1.5 has often been cited for the pathos created by its stark contrast between reality and delusion,²⁰ which meet and clash in the harsh

juxtaposition of the lovers' breakup (*discidium*, line 1), a state of affairs confirmed by Delia's new lover (lines 17–18), and the poet's futile fantasy of an idyllic life together (lines 21–34). This description of the poet's vision of himself and Delia transplanted to a farm that does not exist to live a life they could never have serves the immediate purpose of showcasing the poet's desperation in the waning hours of his love affair. Its carefully controlled imagery contrasts with the image given at the beginning of the poem of the poet famously spinning like a top set loose by a boy at play. After a series of descriptions of ways in which the poet has attempted to recover from his loss, he reveals that this entire poem has been recited at his former lover's doorstep.

Critics have held poem 1.5 up as a paradigm for the poet's disjointed style. Typical is the comment of Francis Cairns that its events are presented to the reader "not chronologically but in the most emotionally effective order,"²¹ a feature that makes the poem difficult to follow. We can see this in the structure of the poem. No sooner has the poet returned to the present circumstances of his writing (*nunc*, line 17), after an eight-line description of Delia's past illness (lines 9–16), than his account of the fantasy plunges the reader back into the past with its use of an imperfect tense verb (*fingebam*, line 20). Despite its participation in this temporal careening, the fantasy, with its attention to the details of life on the farm and agrarian ritual, slows the pace of the poem and gives it a visual focus, setting a scene that invites the reader to pause and imagine it in his or her mind's eye. This stabilizing quality is ironic, since the poet himself characterizes the fantasy as evanescent immediately upon recounting it.²²

In lines 13–14, the poet writes of trying to protect Delia from terrifying nightmares possibly induced by her illness: "ipse procuravi, ne possent saeva nocere / somnia, ter sancta devenienda mola" ("I myself took care to make sure no cruel dreams would harm you, which had to be averted by offering holy meal three times"). These lines are part of the poet's account of Delia's illness, an event that precipitates the creation of his fantasy at line 19: "at mihi felicem vitam, si salva fuisses, / fingebam demens, sed renuente deo" ("yet I used to fantasize foolishly about a happy life for myself if you were saved, but a god refused me," lines 19–20). Like his offering of the holy meal, his creation of the fantasy is an attempt to ward off what is beyond his control—in the immediate moment, he tries to cure Delia of her illness, but lurking behind this move is an attempt to stave off her rejection of him.

The proximity of Tibullus's reference to Delia's dreams and his account of his fantasy suggests that the two are related. In his commentary on lines 19–20, Michael Putnam hints at a temporal connection between the two types of "dream," suggesting that they occurred concurrently.²³ Thus one way to read the fantasy is

as a direct and complementary response to Delia's dreams: as he banishes her frightening nightmares (*saeva somnia*), he internalizes and transforms them by creating pleasant fantasies of his own. The use of *at mihi* at the opening of line 19 and the imperfect tense of the verb *fingebam* to indicate simultaneity strongly suggest a correlation between her dreams and his fantasy. But their juxtaposition also underscores the difference between them: dream and fantasy are equally powerful, but Delia's *saeva somnia* derive their intensity from their effects upon her while in a fevered state, whereas Tibullus's fantasy derives its intensity from its content. Her experience is involuntary, while his is deliberate. This contrast is key for distinguishing Tibullus's fantasy from a dream, and yet the opacity of Delia's (actual) dreams throws into relief the vivid detail of the poet's fantasy.

Tibullus first characterizes his fantasy as an elaboration upon his idea of a *felix vitam* ("a happy existence"), whose fruition would have resulted from and been contingent upon Delia's recovery from illness, had the god allowed them to stay together. So the fantasy arises in its immediate context from intense desire for Delia to recover from illness ("si salva fuisses"). The clash between wish (Delia faithful to him) and reality (Delia with a new lover) is conveyed by the repetition of the adjective *felix*, used earlier to describe the new lover's possession of Delia: "omnia persolvi: fruitur nunc alter amore, / et precibus felix utitur ille meis" ("I made good on all my vows, but now another man enjoys the love that should be mine; happy, he reaps the benefits of my prayers," lines 17–18). Thus the poet's characterization of his fantasy as a wish for "a happy existence" (*felix vitam*), which so closely echoes the present state of Delia's new lover (*felix*), encourages the reader to read the fantasy as a reaction to the present reality (although, chronologically speaking, this is impossible). Having already learned that Tibullus's place has been taken by the new lover, the reader is predisposed to interpret the fantasy as impossible—both because it contains an incongruous vision of Delia in an imaginary location, and because its underlying desire for Delia's loyalty has been dashed by the arrival of a new lover.

Tibullus refers to his fantasy as *vota* at the end of the description (line 36). Considering the word *vota* in context, it seems to mean more than just a wish expressed aloud. This noun looks back to the poet's statement in line 19 that the god denied his desire for a happy existence, and thus suggests that it was uttered in the form of a prayer to an unsympathetic god ("sed renuente deo").²⁴ In fact, *votum* is a significant word in this poem, where it is used three times, accounting for a third of its usages in the entire Tibullan corpus. In all three instances, the noun refers to prayers or vows made by the poet while Delia was suffering from a grave illness. The first usage (line 10) reveals that the poet's *vota* were in fact what saved Delia from her illness: "ille ego, cum tristi morbo defessa iaceres, / te dicor

votis eripuisse meis” (“It is said that I, with my prayers, saved you while you lay exhausted by grave illness,” lines 9–10). The content of the prayers is not described, but this line establishes a connection between the poet’s act of prayer and Delia’s recovery. The second instance of *vota* has similar meaning. In line 16 *vota* refers to vows or offerings made by the poet to the goddess Trivia by night to aid Delia’s recovery: “ipse ego velatus filo tunicisque solutis / vota novem Triviae nocte silente dedi” (“I myself made nine vows to Trivia in the dead of night, wearing a woolen fillet and with my robe undone,” lines 15–16).

With these declarations about the efficacy of his prayers and vows in mind, it is all the more shocking to learn from the poet in line 36 that his wishes (*vota*) for a happy life with Delia were weightless and meaningless, as the metaphor of the winds scattering the prayers in faraway Armenia (lines 35–36) implies. Putnam calls the *votis* of line 10 “prayers (which seem scarcely to be distinguished from a lover’s desires),” thus linking these *vota* (prayers) with the *vota* (desires) of line 36.²⁵ I would not suggest that the fantasy of lines 21–34 reveals the actual content of these earlier prayers, but it is logical to think of the fantasy described by *vota* in line 36 as having a function similar to these earlier prayers, as both are reactions to Delia’s illness. In particular, it is important to note that the use of *vota* to describe his fantasy reinforces the notion that the fantasy is the deliberate creation of the poet in response to a situation that he wants to counteract, and thus is like a prayer uttered to effect this change.

As far as the poet himself describes it, his fantasy of lines 21–34 is both a wish for personal happiness (*felicem vitam*, line 19) and an articulation of prayers (*vota*, line 36) offered up to a reluctant god. Thus the fantasy has both extrinsic and intrinsic force, as both prayer directed outward to alter Delia’s ill health and a reflection of the poet’s inner wishes. As a direct reaction to his desperation in the face of Delia’s deathly languor (“cum tristi morbo defessa iaceres,” line 9), the fantasy’s image of a vital and active Delia announces itself as a direct contrast between the Delia the poet sees before him and the one he envisions in his mind. Thus the images of happiness in the fantasy clash with the larger context for the poem: the end of the lovers’ relationship in the poem’s present. But these images also elide the immediate cause for their separation in the poem’s past: Delia’s prolonged illness. The fact that the poet draws explicit attention to his fantasy’s contrast with the poem’s “reality” through reference to his own hand in creating this alternative reality is significant, for it highlights the creation of fantasy as a subjective response to external circumstances and thus hints at the similarity between fantasizer and poet as creators of believable fictions.

Aside from its evocation of the poem’s earlier references to prayers, the poet’s choice of *vota* to describe his fantasy has additional significance. As we shall see,

the fantasy is described in highly visual terms, and yet its designation as a prayer (*vota*) reminds us that it was likely articulated aloud. The poet's reference to the unsympathetic god ("renuente deo," line 20) reinforces this characterization, as does the poet's declaration that his *vota* were scattered by the winds.²⁶ The emphasis upon the fantasy's original articulation through speech reminds us of the origins of *phantasia* in rhetoric. By evoking the orator's process of using *enargeia* to bring to life the images of his *phantasia* for his listener, Tibullus inspires his reader to react to his fantasy as though a viewer of its scenes.

The designation of the fantasy as *vota* may also have a meta-poetic significance. Let us consider the narrator's lament about the inefficacy of a poet's words in the face of a rich man's wealth, a common trope in elegiac poetry, at lines 67–68: "heu canimus frustra nec verbis victa patescit / ianua sed plena est percutienda manu" ("Alas, I sing in vain and her door does not open conquered by words, but rather it must be battered by a full hand"). If we are to interpret the poem as a *paraclausithyron*, as several commentators have suggested we do, there is an additional level of rhetorical appeal worth considering here.²⁷ Perhaps the content of the narrator's song at the door (*canimus*) is one and the same as the poem we have just been reading. If so, the articulation of the fantasy within the poem, itself a re-creation of an original spoken prayer, replicates in microcosm the larger poetic action of "singing" a poem of persuasion to Delia behind her closed door.

Narrating the Fantasy: Lines 21–34

The narrator's fantasy, related in lines 21–34, has a loosely triadic structure, in which three sections of four lines each (21–24, 25–28, 31–34) present scenes of rustic life. Each section contains detailed descriptions of individual snapshots that appear juxtaposed rather than linked in a continuous narrative. Delia is no longer the second-person addressee, as she has been up until this point in the poem. Described in the fantasy in the third person, she becomes a character in the scene. The first section of the fantasy, lines 21–24, imagines her as guardian (*custos*) of the farm, overseeing the production of grain and wine:

rura colam, frugumque aderit mea Delia custos,
area dum messes sole calente teret,
aut mihi servabit plenis in lintribus uvas
 pressaue veloci candida musta pede . . .

[I will cultivate the land, and Delia will be there with me as guardian of the crops, while the threshing floor threshes the grain under the blazing sun, or she will watch over the grapes in full vats as shining new wine is pressed by a swift foot . . .]

Although the fantasy begins with the active participation of the narrator (“*rura colam*,” line 21), showing that he is “present” in the fantasy, after this point his role becomes that of observer of the scenes before him. This phenomenon is typical of dream scenes and is reminiscent, for example, of the dreamer’s stance in *Amores* 3.5, discussed in chapter 1. After the narrator’s initial statement of involvement, the subject changes to Delia, whose participation in the scene is first defined by her presence (*aderit*); her connection to the narrator is suggested by the adjective *mea* rather than through any shared activity. The poet’s detachment from the action of the fantasy is accentuated by the lack of reference to sound or speech within the narration and complemented by an acute attention to descriptive detail, exemplified by the poet’s use of multiple adjectives.

The subsequent three lines offer lively images of threshing and wine production, described with adjectives that indicate the visual or kinetic qualities of the activities. The phrases *sole calente* (line 22) and *veloci pede* (line 24) refer to the processes by which production of grain and wine occurs: the former conveys the intensity of the sun’s light, which, as Robert Maltby suggests, may have been thought to contribute to the drying of the grain after the threshing process.²⁸ The second phrase, *veloci pede*, implies the rapid physical movement needed for pressing the grapes to make wine. The adjectives *plenis* and *candida*, describing respectively the vats for pressing the grapes for wine (*lintribus*) and the appearance of the wine at the end of the pressing process (*musta*), indicate the abundance of grapes and the superior quality of the wine they produce. Through references to the fullness of the vats and the appearance of the wine, the poet adds visual details that enhance the reader’s ability to imagine the scene. In contrast to the poet’s declaration of action in the first couplet (*rura colam*), by the start of the next couplet (line 23), his role has been reduced to a detached presence. As indicated by the dative of interest in *mihi servabit*, he is involved neither with the action described nor with its immediate supervision. Rather, the use of *mihi* (in emphatic position in its clause) indicates that the poet is a kind of “observer,” a party influenced by the action of the scene.

The second section contains images of Delia’s involvement in various activities on the farm. She will become accustomed to counting the sheep and comfortably interacting with a young slave: “*consuescet numerare pecus, consuescet amantis /*

garrulus in dominae ludere verna sinu” (“she will be accustomed to count the flock, a young slave babbles and plays in his loving mistress’s lap,” lines 25–26). Although the slave is described as *garrulus*, we do not hear his chatter or laughter; instead, we get a glimpse of his intimate interaction with Delia as though we were observers standing just out of earshot. The asyndeton in line 25 causes a disjunction between these two actions and encourages the reader to envision them as distinct snapshots of Delia’s life on the farm.

In lines 27–28, we read of her attentiveness to proper sacrifice: “illa deo sciet agricolae pro vitibus uvam, / pro segete spicas, pro grege ferre dapem” (“she will know the proper offerings for the rustic god—grapes for vines, an ear of grain for the grain fields, and a sacrificial meal for the flock”). The structured description, with its triple anaphora referring to Delia’s offerings and the production they will ensure, is visually striking on the page. Furthermore, by reducing the process of sacrifice to three physical entities—the god (easily envisioned here as a statue), the offering, and the anticipated result from the proper sacrifice—the narrator elides the human activity involved and instead provides a static tableau of the individual components of the process. This mode of description, while equally expressive in its detail, lacks the dynamic quality of the first triptych (lines 22–24).

Following the second scene is a transitional couplet that bridges two images: sacrifice to the rustic god in an outdoor shrine and veneration of an esteemed guest, Tibullus’s patron Messalla, inside the house. Having established Delia’s competence at running the farm, the poet follows these lines with a bold statement of her supreme authority there: “illa regat cunctos, illi sint omnia curae” (“may she be in charge of everyone, may everything be her concern,” line 29). The words *cunctos* and *omnia* contrast with the detailed descriptions of her individual actions up to this point. As these adjectives eliminate detail, they also reveal the lack of participation of others in running the farm. This exclusion is expressed in the next line, where the narrator admits his own marginal role in all of this activity: “at iuvet in tota me nihil esse domo” (“but may it please me to be nothing in the entire house,” line 30). By stating that he will “be nothing” in the house, the poet articulates what has already been evident from the previous lines: he is present, but does not participate in the activities of the fantasy. Bright writes that the poet assumes the “role of spectator, watching his own dream but not part of it.”²⁹ Tibullus’s only involvement in the fantasy has been to witness Delia’s proper execution of the duties of the farmer’s wife from the standpoint of an observer, and in line 30 he acknowledges this role with a stark contrast between Delia and himself.

The third scene (lines 31–34) extends the image of the narrator as marginal to the action, while using different visual dynamics:

huc veniet Messalla meus, cui dulcia poma
 Delia selectis detrahat arboribus;
 et tantum venerata virum hunc sedula curet,
 huic paret atque epulas ipsa ministra gerat.

[My dear Messalla will come here too, and may Delia offer him sweet fruits from choice trees; and having honored this venerable guest, may she tend to his needs and prepare and serve him a feast as his faithful attendant.]

Rather than evoke the vividness of the scene with pictorial language, the poet utilizes a viewing paradigm from the epiphany/message dream to lend the scene a visual quality. Tibullus's diction here is comparable to a passage from poem 1.3, in which the poet envisions himself appearing to Delia in an epiphany-like dream: "tunc veniam subito, nec quisquam nuntiet ante, / sed videar caelo missus adesse tibi" ("then may I come suddenly, and may no one announce my arrival, but let me seem/appear to you to have been sent to your side from the heavens," lines 89–90).³⁰ As Tibullus retreats to the border of the action, Messalla appears suddenly in the fantasy as though an epiphany in line 31 ("huc veniet Messalla meus").³¹ This sudden appearance is recounted as though from the point of view of an unsuspecting viewer, a sleeping dreamer upon whom a vision of this type would typically descend, like Delia in poem 1.3. Furthermore, Messalla's sudden appearance in the fantasy, emphasized by the poet's use of a future-tense verb (*veniet* [cf. *veniam* in 1.3.89]) that contrasts with the four subjunctive verbs used to describe Delia's action, recalls the sudden declaration of the fantasy (and the poet's presence in it) introduced by the future-tense *colam* in line 21.³²

This "epiphany" of Messalla infuses the fantasy with an oneiric quality, thus suggesting that the role of the narrator in his fantasy is similar to the dreamer's role as viewer in the dream: he watches the action unfold before him from a position on the perimeter. The remainder of the fantasy (lines 32–34) envisions Delia as a faithful attendant (*ministra*) to this valued guest, whom she treats as though a god (*venerata*), creating a flurry of activity around him as he receives her offerings like the statue of the rustic deity from the previous lines. Although he is not described, Messalla's presence is suggested by the repetition of the pronouns *cui* (line 31), *hunc* (line 33), and *huic* (line 34) as the focal point of activity.

The narrator's marginality within the fantasy is progressive and can be tracked through his use of first-person verbs, pronouns, and adjectives. After the first-person declaration of his creation of the fantasy (*fingebam*, line 20), the narrator introduces the content of the fantasy with a first-person active verb (*colam*, line 21). The verb *colam*, here meaning "cultivate" rather than "inhabit," as, for example, J. P. Postgate

translates it,³³ also serves the purpose of establishing (with its object *rura*) the location at which the action of the fantasy will take place. By introducing the fantasy with the mention of a place (*rura*), the narrator recasts the difference between reality and fantasy as one that spans a spatial distance. Fantasy is separated from reality with a cue to the reader to envision a new setting. Beyond this initial definitive action, however, the poet's presence in the fantasy is relegated to pronouns in oblique cases and possessive adjectives (*mea*, *mihi*, *me*, *meus*), appearing in chiasmic order in lines 21, 23, 30, and 31.

Complementing Tibullus's retreat to the margins is the anaphora of demonstrative pronouns *illa*, *illa*, and *illi* (in lines 27 and 29), referring to Delia in her active capacity on the farm. As she takes care to offer the proper sacrifices to the proper gods and demonstrates her control over her duties, her role is emphasized by the repetition of pronouns referring to her. The contrast between Delia's active role and Tibullus's passive one is underscored by the positions of *illi* (line 29) and *me* (line 30) directly after the caesuras in their respective lines within the couplet. Although the pronouns occupy the same position, their referents play opposing roles in the narrative, a dichotomy that is reinforced by the nouns *omnia* and *nihil* that follow the pronouns in their respective lines.

Many critiques of the fantasy just discussed have focused upon interpretation of specific elements of its content as manifestations of the narrator's unattainable desires or unconscious wishes. For example, Bright sees in lines 25–26, in which a young slave plays in Delia's lap, substitutes for the poet and his lover, imagined as slave and mistress.³⁴ Parshia Lee-Stecum reads the fantasy as an arena in which the poet works out the ongoing power struggle between himself and Delia by expressing his wish for her obedience.³⁵ Paul Allen Miller, whose approach to the fantasy is in keeping with his application of the methods of Freudian dream interpretation to the expressions of wish throughout the corpus, sees Messalla as “the poet's ideal mirror image. He occupies the position Tibullus longs for but of which he cannot even truly dream.”³⁶ Although they may differ in their interpretations of the symbolism of the individual scenes, these representative approaches are united by their emphases upon the subjective quality of the fantasy—that is, what the dreamer reveals to the reader about some aspect of what we might call his “psychology” or his internal desires. I have focused instead upon the role of the narrator both as a viewer of his fantasy and as a character within it. The two approaches are not incompatible, as both try to evaluate the narrator's self-presentation within the fantasy. My approach, however, is more concerned with presentation of content as a mode of communication than with analysis of the content's symbolism.

Virtually every analysis of the fantasy registers the significance of the poet's marginal perspective on the image he creates, a position that Miller, for example,

compares to that of a “passive observer.”³⁷ The narrator’s role at the sidelines, as a witness to the activity he imagines rather than as a participant in the tableau of his creation, should be central to our thinking about the poet’s role as a viewer of his fantasy. This, in turn, should inform our understanding of the model of spectatorship that the poet provides for his readers.

As we recall, Quintilian stated that the purpose of *enargeia* was to elicit an emotional response (*adfectus*) from the listener.³⁸ Simon Goldhill has urged us to remember that *enargeia* “is a rhetorical weapon to get around the censor of the intellect, to cut the listener off from the facts, to leave him not just ‘as if a viewer at events,’ but with the destabilizing emotions of that event.”³⁹ This dual effect is particularly relevant in the case of Tibullus’s retelling of his fantasy in poem 1.5. Tibullus converts his reader into a viewer by retelling the fantasy from the perspective of a marginalized viewer of its scenes, itself a reflection of the narrator’s own emotional role in the fantasy. Thus when the reader of his poem envisions the fantasy from this perspective, he or she shares the narrator’s emotional role within the fantasy. Furthermore, bringing the image of unreality so vividly before the reader’s eyes means that the reader not only sees what the narrator saw but, immediately cut off from the poem’s external circumstances, is plunged into the emotional world of the image, precisely by means of its jarring contradiction with the established “reality.” The narrator’s abrupt dismissal of the fantasy as soon as it is recounted reinforces the emotional effect of his role as onlooker. As both the narrator and the reader are bereft of the image itself, they are torn from the unrealistic but peaceful mood of the image, and thus are forced to make an emotional shift as they return to the external circumstances surrounding the account of the fantasy.

The repetition of the pronoun *mihi* with the verb *fingebam* in lines 20 and 35 emphasizes the poet’s fantasy as self-reflexive: the vision was imagined both for his own benefit, as consolation for his anxiety over Delia’s illness, and for his exclusive viewing.⁴⁰ But despite this emphasis upon the fantasy as a fleeting, internal vision articulated through prayer, by describing the fantasy in his poem and thus memorializing it, Tibullus not only shares it with the (external) reader, but invites the reader to view it as well. If the act of creating the fantasy (sometime in the past) was a subjective experience, the act of recounting it to the reader (in the poem’s present) renders its contents available for external viewing and evaluation. The poet’s use of vivid, kinetic language and emphasis upon witnessing the events of the fantasy as though present, but not participating in them, encourages the listener to witness the scene as though experiencing it himself or herself. When Tibullus articulates his visual fantasy (*phantasia*) in words (using *enargeia*), he collapses the distinction between internal and external viewing, thus creating something that melds the two. In transferring the mental image to words, he

creates a type of ekphrasis, which, as I demonstrate below, he marks out as a creative and particularly poetic act.

***Fingebam demens:*
Revealing the Creative Process**

Phantasia is an inherently creative process, and Tibullus's fantasy is specifically marked by references to the process of its creation, primarily through the verb *fingebam* (lines 20 and 35), which describes the action itself. The verb has the primary meaning "to form or shape,"⁴¹ as in the process of molding clay for pottery. We recall that Quintilian used *ingere* to describe the orator's creation of *phantasia*: the speaker who best creates (*optime fingit*) things, words, and actions in realistic fashion is called the best at making *phantasiai* (εὐφαντασίωτον). We might say that he is best at "visualizing," and indeed "to visualize" is a commonly attested meaning of *ingere*.⁴² But the narrator's action in poem 1.5 is also qualified by the adjective *demens* (line 20), which describes the creator's mental state as mad or foolish. As I have suggested, the vocabulary used to introduce dream descriptions, such as the participle *visus*, offers important information about how the dreamer characterizes the experience of dreaming. The same is true for Tibullus's introduction of his fantasy here.

The combination of love, madness, and fantasy is not unique to poem 1.5.⁴³ In poem 2.6, the final poem of book 2, anxiety about the beloved's absence and jealousy (here characterized as madness) lead the lover to create an image of her. Lying alone in the night and waiting for his beloved, the narrator is told by a meddlesome *lena* that she won't come. Separated from her against his will, he imagines jealously her union with another man (lines 49–52):

saepe, ubi nox mihi promissa est, languere puellam
nuntiat aut aliquas extimuisse minas.
tunc morior curis, tunc mens mihi perdita fingit,
quisve meam teneat, quot teneatve modis.

[Often, when I have been promised the night with my lover, [the *lena*] announces that she lies ill or has been frightened by some other threats. Then I die from anxiety; at that point my mad mind creates images of the other man who embraces her and in how many ways they seek pleasure.]

As in poem 1.5, separation from his beloved and confrontation with circumstances beyond his control cause the lover to retreat into his own mind. Engaging

in *phantasia*, the poet's mad mind (*mens perdita*) creates (*fingit*) an image of Nemesis's new lover and the many forms of their pleasure. In this case, the poet imagines his lover engaged in an activity that, as in poem 1.5, stands in direct contrast to what precedes it, a reference to the girl lying ill: compare "languere puellam" (2.6.49) with "tristi morbo defessa iaceres" (1.5.9). In both poems, furthermore, the poet imagines a scene from which he is excluded. But the scenes imagined in each poem are utterly different in nature. In the case above (2.6), the indirect questions reveal the imagined scene to be an abstract vision, while the images of the fantasy of 1.5 are detailed and precisely crafted. The passage above emphasizes the poet's madness, caused by the anxiety that pushes him to create irrational scenarios, while the passage in poem 1.5 draws more attention to the intricacies of the extended, imagined scene.

Indeed, it is possible to read the adjective *demens* as merely an acknowledgment of a lover's madness, an admission of the irrational mindset of lovers deranged by love. Andreas Grüner, for example, suggests a link between the use of *demens* in line 20 and the image of the top spinning out of control that begins the poem (lines 3–4), arguing that the opening image of the top is "programmatic" for the poet's lack of control over his emotions throughout the poem.⁴⁴ As Duncan Kennedy observes, however, we can read *demens* as the poet's retrospective acknowledgement of the folly involved in creating a fantasy that he knows from the poem's present perspective to have been futile.⁴⁵ That is, rather than describing the poet's mental state at the time of creation as "mad," *demens* reflects his "changed perception" of the past from the point of view of the poem's present. The fantasy contains not the mad images of a character from tragedy, such as Pentheus, for example, whom Vergil called *demens* in a simile for Dido's feverish nightmare, fleeing the Furies of his mother and seeing double images.⁴⁶ Rather, Tibullus's act is characterized as *demens* because its contents clash so jarringly with what surrounds it: in the narrative time of the poem, the circumstances of its creation (Delia's illness), and, in the chronology of events, the aftermath of the fantasy (Delia's abandonment of the poet). This clash is signaled by the insertion of the anachronistic revelation of Delia's new lover (*alter*) in the couplet preceding the fantasy (lines 17–18), which makes the content of the fantasy (in which the poet and Delia coexist harmoniously) seem all the more incongruous. Proleptic knowledge of the new lover adds a new dimension to the reader's understanding of the poet's "madness" in terms of contradiction.

By qualifying his act of creation with the adjective *demens*, Tibullus prepares the reader for a description of visual delusion, such as that of Dido or Pentheus, but despite the word's implications, the images Tibullus sees in his fantasy can hardly be called nightmarish in the same sense. Rather, what constitutes the

“madness” of Tibullus’s fantasy is that it incorporates realistic, ordered, and even mundane imagery within a context that is completely at odds with its surroundings. The images of Tibullus’s fantasy are remarkable not because of violations of integrity within their content, but because of their notable incongruity within the poem. This suggestion of violation complements the structural detachment of the description itself from the rest of the poem.

The fantasy of poem 1.5 is enclosed and thus marked off from the rest of the poem by repetition of the verb *fingebam* in lines 20 and 35. The first instance of *fingere*, in line 20, looks ahead to the content of the fantasy, which is narrated in apposition to the verb’s object, *felicem vitam* (line 19). With the assistance of the demonstrative *haec* in its deictic capacity, the second *fingebam* (line 35) both guides the reader’s focus back toward the poet’s creation and establishes its closure. As Kennedy observes, the verbs serve as a kind of “frame” for the fantasy as they demarcate its beginning and end;⁴⁷ semantically, however, they introduce and confirm, respectively, the poet’s characterization of the fantasy as a creative act. By defining the fantasy on either side with a word referring to the act of creating it, the poet isolates and thus highlights the lines in between as his “creation.” Furthermore, by repeating *fingere* in order to highlight his creation, he in turn draws attention to the act of creation itself.

Let us focus for a moment on the significance of *fingere* as a framing device for the fantasy. *Fingere* is used by authors from Cato to Pliny to refer to activities that involve shaping malleable, usually natural, material into a new form.⁴⁸ In poem 2.3, for example, Tibullus uses the passive participle of the verb in its primary sense to refer to the process of fashioning wine vessels: “at mihi laeta trahant Samiae convivia testae / fictaque Cumana lubrica terra rota” (“but let Samian pottery and slippery clay fashioned on the Cumaeon wheel lengthen my joyous parties,” lines 51–52). In this example *ficta* does not just mean “fashioned” but refers specifically to the act of shaping or fashioning something useful (*ficta*) out of raw material (*lubrica terra*) through the application of artistic skill. As Putnam observes in his commentary on this line, “The potter’s art is nicely summarized as the earth changes from *lubrica* to *ficta* via the wheel.”⁴⁹

The verb *fingere* is commonly used figuratively to refer to numerous different types of creation. We see one such usage in a passage from Tibullus that illustrates the frequent association of the verb with the creation of something deceptive.⁵⁰ At the beginning of poem 1.6, the poet laments the fact that he has taught certain tricks to Delia so well that she is now using them against him (lines 9–12):

ipse miser docui, quo posset ludere pacto
custodes: heu heu nunc premor arte mea!

fingere nunc didicit causas, ut sola cubaret,
cardine nunc tacito vertere posse fores . . .

[What a wretch am I who taught her how to trick the guards: alas! Alas!
I am now outwitted by my own skill! Now she has learned to fabricate
reasons why she must sleep alone, now she has learned how to open the
door without making a sound.]

This passage makes an explicit connection between fabrication (*fingere*) and the lover's skill (*ars*). At first glance, this use of the verb is semantically far removed from its original meaning. But as Putnam observes, the primary meaning of *fingere* is evoked through its juxtaposition with *ars*: "The metaphor, from moulding or modeling a statue, particularizes the poet's *ars* at work in his capable pupil."⁵¹ Hence Delia becomes like a sculptor, learning her craft from a master. Creating something useful from raw material, so to speak, her artistic medium is deception—in this case the ability not only to feign an excuse (*fingere causas*), but to make it seem convincing to its recipient.

We might compare the word's use in a passage from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in which its original and secondary meanings are blended. Ovid describes the creation of dream images in *Metamorphoses* 11.626–28, where Iris entreats Somnus to send a dream to Alcyone, whose husband Ceyx has died at sea: "somnia, quae veras aequant imitamine formas, / Herculea Trachine iube sub imagine Regis / Alcyonen adeant, simulacraque naufraga fingant" ("order dreams, which replicate appearances through imitation of the real, to approach Alcyone in Herculean Trachis in the guise of King Ceyx and to fashion an imitation of him shipwrecked"). Here the dreams (*somnia*) are the subject of *fingant*, described as agents who create visual imitations (*simulacra*) of real things. These are false, intangible images designed to deceive their recipient with their approximation of reality. To effect this impersonation, the deity dispatches his son Morpheus, whose epithet *artifex* in line 634 recalls the original meaning of the verb *fingere*, to assume the appearance of the dead Ceyx in the dream of his wife, Alcyone.

Given its basic association with the craftsmanship of skilled artisans and the evocation of this meaning even in its figurative usage, it is no surprise that *fingere* was appropriated by poets to describe the work that they do in creating their poetry. And in fact this adopted meaning of *fingere* is found in the works of two of Tibullus's contemporaries. Propertius uses the verb in poem 4.1, the opening poem of his final book of elegies, in which he experiments with new themes for his elegiac poetry. Having threatened earlier in the poem to undertake writing poetry in the etiological vein, he is commanded by his companion, the astrologer Horos,

to stick to writing elegy at line 135: “at tu finge elegos, fallax opus (haec tua castra!)” (“But you create elegies, deceitful work (this is your camp!)”). Thus Horos defines the elegiac poet’s work as an act of fashioning that is specifically opposed to the work of poets who write epic or etiological poetry.

The verb is used by Horace to refer specifically to the creation of his poetry in a programmatic statement found at the beginning of his fourth book of Odes. At *Carmina* 4.2.27–32, the poet describes his work: “ego apis Matinae / more modoque, / grata carpentis thyma per laborem / plurimum, circa nemus uvidique / Tiburis ripas operosa parvus / carmina fingo” (“A humble man, I fashion my elaborate poems in the custom and manner of a Matinian bee, who gathers pollen from the pleasant thyme through great effort around the grove and banks of watery Tibur”). In this declaration Horace uses *fingere* to refer to writing while hinting at the verb’s original meaning of shaping a form from unshaped material. Like the bee gathering nectar to turn into honey, the poet Horace works hard to transform raw material into poetry.⁵² As Propertius does, Horace uses *fingere* in a programmatic statement to describe the process of creating one kind of poetry specifically in contrast to another style of writing.

In suggesting these passages as parallels for Tibullus’s possibly programmatic use of *fingere*, I am inspired by David Wray’s article on Tibullus’s “easy hands,” in which he makes a persuasive case for identifying, in words referring to “making,” Tibullus’s self-conscious references to his own poetic creativity.⁵³ Scrutinizing Tibullus’s use of the adjective *facilis* twice in poem 1.1 (lines 8 and 40), Wray demonstrates that with this word, a calque of the Greek adjective ποιητικός, the poet makes a programmatic statement about the creative work that poets “make.” In Wray’s reading, thinking of the poet as a maker stands in distinction to the notion that poets are divinely inspired, doing what they do in response to the influence of “prophetic visions and dreams.”⁵⁴ Wray’s complex and nuanced argument reminds us that we should register the instances when Tibullus mentions *poesis* (“making”), such as in references to farming or making cups, as moments at which the poet acknowledges his own role as a “maker.”⁵⁵ We have much to gain from Wray’s identification of a self-conscious poetic voice in Tibullus’s poetry, particularly in our analysis of *fingere*, which, as Wray demonstrates, is a close counterpart to *facere* (“to make”).⁵⁶ While Wray is ultimately more interested in demonstrating the multiple resonances of the adjective *facilis* in Tibullus’s poetry, his supporting argument establishes enough importance around the poet’s references to “doing” that it is impossible to read verbs like *fingere* without considering the possibility that they refer in some way to the poet’s work. At the very least, encountering *fingere* at the beginning of our passage in poem 1.5 with Wray’s commentary in

mind should remind us of the firm connection in Tibullus's poetics between the work that artisans do and the work that poets "do."

Let us return to the fantasy of poem 1.5. Maltby has suggested that Tibullus might have been alluding to Vergil's eighth *Eclogue* as he composed his fantasy in poem 1.5, noting the use of *figere* in both poems.⁵⁷ In Vergil's poem, the shepherd Alpheisiboeus takes on the persona of a woman who sings of casting spells and performing magic rituals to ensure the return of her lover Daphnis. In the song's final verse, the singer acknowledges various external indications that Daphnis may soon appear, only to undercut this conclusion with a question that is never answered (lines 105–8):

aspice: corripuit tremulis altaria flammis
sponte sua, dum ferre moror, cinis ipse. bonum sit!
nescio quid certe est, et Hylax in limine latrat.
credimus? an, qui amat, ipsi sibi somnia fingunt?

[Look: the ash ignites the altar in the flickering flames all by itself, without me touching it. Let this be a good sign! Certainly it is something, but Hylax barks in the doorway. Should I believe it? Or do lovers create dreams for themselves?]

In the poem's final line, Alpheisiboeus uses the unusual metaphor *somnia fingere* ("to create dreams") to refer to the images the singer fabricates of her absent lover out of desire for him.⁵⁸ Although the singer is not literally dreaming, Alpheisiboeus here uses the dream as a metaphor for engaging in a type of *phantasia*, as she imagines something that is not there. Both dream and fantasy are capable of creating a powerful illusion for the viewer, and this similarity allows for the metaphor's success.

In Vergil's poem, the singer wishes for her lover to return from the city and begins to trust signs that he is returning before questioning their truthfulness in the final line. Her open question suggests that her trust in these signs is illusory, since lovers are prone to create visions of what they desire. Likewise, in Tibullus's poem, the lovers' separation across the divide of illness intensifies the poet's mental image of Delia transformed into a thriving and active farmer's wife. In each case, it is suggested that the visions are created and seen by the lover alone and that it is the power of desire that sparks the lover's creative ability. When transferred to the monologic realm of love elegy, the lover as creator of images is blended with the poet as creator of images; as Tibullus the lover creates images of the beloved for

himself, Tibullus the poet articulates such images in words for his readers. In the poem's narrative, where lover and poet are one and the same, and poetry becomes a tool in attempting to win back Delia, Tibullus the lover-as-poet redeploys the words and images of his prayer as an appeal to the sequestered Delia.

Following Wray's lead, I suggest that Tibullus uses *figere* in poem 1.5 not simply to describe the internal act of visualization, or *phantasia*, for the poet himself, but also to refer metaphorically to the act of poetic craftsmanship that occurs simultaneously—in this case, the re-creation of a visual image in textual terms. In other words, the verb's original meaning of shaping clay into a form influences our comprehension of the verb's metaphorical meaning of creating visual imagery in the imagination. Exploiting this duality of meaning, Tibullus prepares the reader to accept what follows as not simply an account of his fantasy, but as a poetic retelling of the experience of seeing the fantasy through the mode of description appropriate to the verbal description of images, namely ekphrasis.

Thus far I have primarily considered the narrator's re-creation of his fantasy as a mode for communicating certain imagery and dynamics to the poem's reader. By presenting the content of his fantasy with a style that creates *enargeia*, Tibullus enables his reader to envision the images of the fantasy as a viewer, thus allowing the reader a special insight into a subjective experience that he or she would be otherwise unable to gain. By giving the reader his own perspective on the scene conjured in the fantasy—namely, that of himself watching the scenes of Delia and Messalla engaged in certain roles pass before him while he becomes progressively marginalized—Tibullus imparts an emotionally effective as well as a visually impressive experience. The emphasis on the fantasy's articulation as a prayer reminds us of the origins of *phantasia* in rhetoric. But its rhetorical effects are heightened when we consider its narrative context. Set off from the rest of the poem, the fantasy represents a creation (a "poem") within a poem: a re-creation in textual terms of the original spoken fantasy, it plays a second role as an address to Delia across the boundary of the closed door. The fantasy's powerlessness in the face of (first) Delia's departure and (second) Delia's closed door throws into relief its effectiveness as a mode for communicating its intensity to the reader. Delia, a one-person jury for the narrator's "oration," fails to be moved by the re-creation of his fantasy, just as the initial enunciation of the fantasy failed to "work" as a prayer to the gods. Where words fail to move Delia, however, their translation into images conveys to the reader an enhanced and visually heightened impression of the poet's desperation.

There are, of course, differences in what Quintilian proposes regarding *phantasia* and what Tibullus is doing in his poem. For example, Quintilian advises the orator to conjure images of things familiar to himself and his listeners so that

they in turn will be able to produce in their minds visual images that parallel his own. This would seem to exclude fantastical images such as wishes and dreams, which do not correspond to “real” situations that would be familiar to the listener. Perhaps for this reason, the terms *phantasia* and *enargeia*, although used frequently in discussions of literary ekphrasis, have not been applied to the study of dream descriptions and the like.⁵⁹ In fact, definitions of *phantasia* varied, as did the notion of what counted as a subject for *phantasia*.⁶⁰ The Stoics especially restricted its meaning to exclude such things as dreams and illusions, which they called *phantasmata*,⁶¹ but, Ruth Webb points out, “In general, however, the rhetoricians use the term in a looser way than do the Stoics to mean any mental image . . . and to imply no automatic judgment as to the truth of that image or its relation to reality.”⁶² Webb’s comprehensive study reminds us that verisimilitude, rather than truth, is the ultimate goal of *phantasia*. The one listening to a vivid description can form a mental image of what is being conveyed not only from personal experience, but also from cultural expectations and a stitching together of other elements “residing in his memory.”⁶³ As Webb observes, among the cultural factors that could influence a reader’s mental image were the visual arts.⁶⁴ If we accept that Tibullus encourages his readers to visualize the fantasy described, and if some of these readers aided themselves in this process by calling upon paradigms from visual art, what sort of visual material might they have had at their disposal for this purpose? In the next section I explore this possibility by considering Tibullus’s fantasy in conjunction with a style of wall painting that would have been familiar to his readers.

Envisioning the Fantasy: The Vision as Painted Panorama

Eleanor Winsor Leach has already established a successful model for analyzing the pastoral passages of Tibullus’s poetry: by interpreting their imagery in comparison with trends in the visual depictions of pastoral scenes in contemporary landscape painting.⁶⁵ Leach’s interest in Tibullus’s poetry centers in particular on the images of rustic sacrifice and worship of the gods that recur throughout it. Of the three types of landscape painting that Leach considers—sacral-idyllic, architectural, and mythological—she finds that the characteristics of sacral-idyllic landscape painting are most readily compared to Tibullus’s imagery.⁶⁶ Among the various types of sacral-idyllic image, she concentrates upon the “vignettes” that depict scenes of rustic worship and appear isolated against a monochromatic background. In these examples, the entire composition of the vignette appears on a central panel offset from the decoration of the rest of the wall.⁶⁷

Leach's parallels between sacral-idyllic paintings and the images of Tibullus's poetry are founded mostly upon shared subject matter, such as images of individuals worshipping rustic gods at country shrines. Typical of Leach's approach is the comparison between Tibullus's image of himself sacrificing at a rural shrine (poem 1.1.11–16) and the central wall-paintings from *cubiculum E* at the Roman villa beneath the Villa Farnesina, which depict an individual worshipping at a monument (fig. 1).⁶⁸ Each context, poetic or painted, presents a detailed image whose main features are worshiper, object of dedication, and the shrine or altar at which the sacrifice occurs. According to Leach, another feature that links Tibullus's visual imagery with that of sacral-idyllic landscape painting is that in both cases there is little indication of "landscape" *per se*. Tibullus's vignettes, she writes, "like the images of sacral-idyllic painting, are foregrounds divorced from backgrounds."⁶⁹

Expanding her view of the literary and painted vignettes to include the wider context for their presentation, Leach sees a parallel between the vignettes of rustic worship in Tibullus's poetry, such as those in the passage cited above and in poem 1.10, within the larger structure of the poem, and the relationship between the painted, central vignette and the images that surrounded it on the walls painted in the late Second Style, such as we see in the central panels of the two walls shown in figure 1. A key feature of landscape painting in general, as Leach articulates it, is the "overt visual contradiction,"⁷⁰ either in content or execution, between the landscape image and the images that surround and contain it. The Farnesina panels that contain the sacral-idyllic vignettes are offset from the expanse of the wall by a frame. Furthermore, the simplicity of the vignette image creates a contrast with the ornate images that surround it.⁷¹ Leach suggests that as viewers of the Farnesina vignettes move closer to the wall, the details of the images become clearer, eventually revealing the technique behind their "illusionistic effect of the imitation of texture and sculpted form."⁷² It is also likely that viewers would acknowledge the contrast between the large structural elements of the wall, such as columns and cornices, and the fine details of the vignettes, as they make a transition between the two by moving closer to the paintings. The same is true of readers navigating their way into the world of Tibullus's rustic fantasy from the context of the poem's outer narrative. As with the landscape vignettes in paintings, so too with Tibullus's poem: the transition between planes, so to speak, is marked by a framing device.

There is an important distinction between the content of the landscape vignettes and the images of Tibullus's fantasy. While the vignettes show a single scene, the fantasy is a concatenation of related but relatively disjointed scenes. Considering this distinction, I would argue that there is a more apt visual parallel for the fantasy of poem 1.5 in a different type of landscape painting: the "frieze style," so called because these paintings have the quality of sculpted reliefs and



Figure 1. Rome, Roman villa beneath the Villa Farnesina, frescoes from cubiculum E. Late first century BCE. Museo Nazionale di Roma. (Photo © Scala / Art Resource, NY)

occupy the position on the wall where the frieze course on the entablature of the exterior of a building would appear.⁷³ Early examples of this type of landscape painting appear on a yellow background in the villas at Oplontis and Boscoreale on the Bay of Naples, but the style reached its apex and its most substantial representation in the room often called the Sala del Monocromo in the so-called House of Livia, likely painted in the years between 30 and 25 BCE, the same period in which Tibullus was (likely) composing and publishing his poems.⁷⁴

Figures 2 and 3 show, respectively, a wall from the Sala del Monocromo in its current state and a drawing reconstructing the missing elements of the wall. The frieze panels occupy a small portion of the wall, providing a frieze course that separates large-scale paintings of festoons along the central portion of the wall from a cornice topped by fanciful candelabras. The dark-red horizontal bands of the cornice above and architrave below separate the frieze from the other elements and isolate it from its context. The yellow panels were painted to create the illusion of continuity, as though each one were part of a long frieze course running behind



Figure 2. Rome, Palatine, House of Livia, Sala del Monocromo, detail of painted wall decoration. Ca. 30 BCE. (Courtesy of the German Archaeological Institute, Neg. D-DAI-Rom 7260)

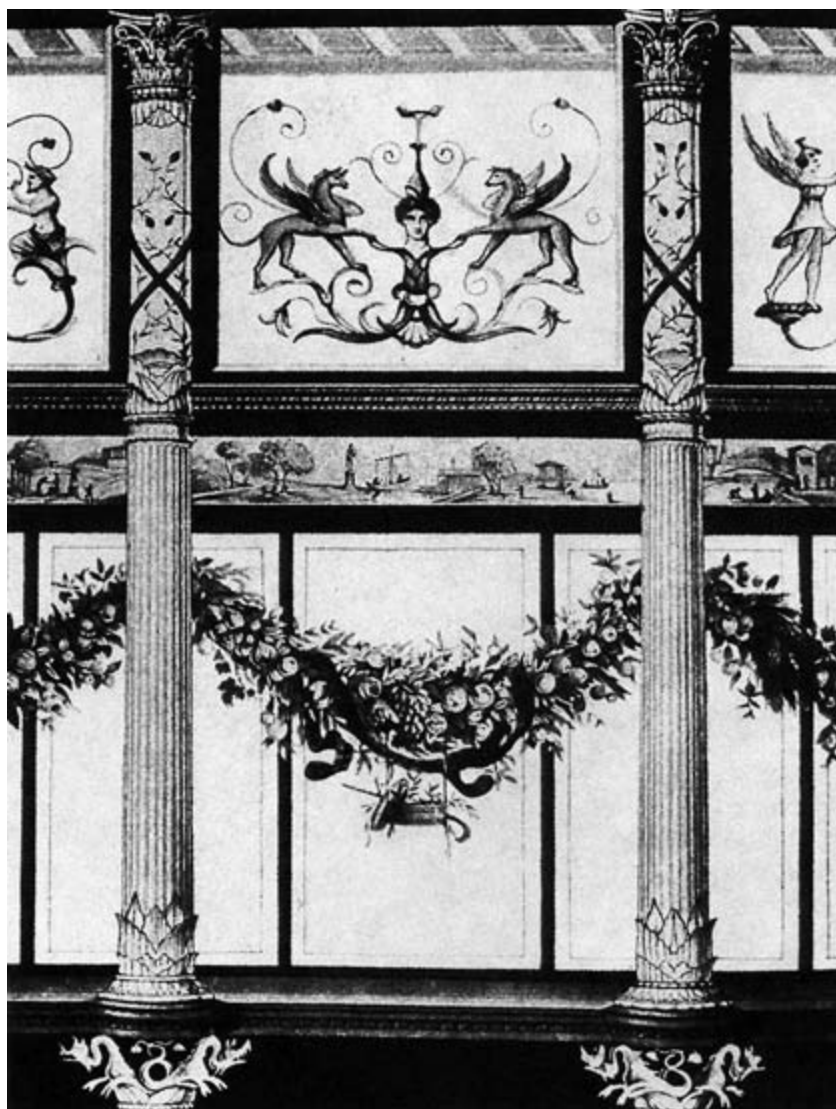


Figure 3. Rome, Palatine, House of Livia, Sala del Monocromo, drawing showing painted wall decoration with missing features restored. (From Rizzo 1936, p. 42, fig. 30)

the columns. Given their diminutive scale atop the vertical orthostates, the angle at which they would have been viewed, and their placement more than three meters above the floor, their continuity would probably have appeared punctuated by the vertical columns, thus creating a series of discrete rectangular, horizontal images.⁷⁵ The contrast that the position of the frieze provides in relation to the larger context is also achieved at the level of its content. As we see in figures 2 and 3, the frieze's yellow background contrasts with the white background of the upper and lower panels. Additionally, the monochromatic frieze is rendered in a much smaller scale than the other images displayed on the wall. Furthermore, its depictions of people and animals within a landscape are unique in the room and, in fact, contrast with the fantastical hybrid candelabras above them and the fruit-laden festoons below.

There is no exact parallel in the House of Livia frieze for the specific imagery of Tibullus's fantasy in poem 1.5: farming activities, making wine, sacrificing, and serving guests. In fact, as Leach writes, "the sphere of human cultivation"—farming in particular—is excluded from Augustan landscapes.⁷⁶ But that is not to say that familiar human activity is not present there. As Roger Ling points out in his summary of the development of landscape painting in Roman art, "The human element, whether in the form of figures or in that of buildings, is always an essential ingredient, even the dominant ingredient."⁷⁷ This is particularly pronounced in the House of Livia frieze, where sketches of human activity lend definition to an otherwise disparate and incoherent scene.⁷⁸

Of the extant frieze paintings, only some are legible. For the sake of example, I select here one panel, the first intercolumnium, to examine in detail (individual sections of the panel are arranged vertically in figure 4). The artist of the frieze has depicted an array of vertical elements that punctuate the landscape, mostly statues on high bases, buildings, and people standing or walking. The human figures are engaged in worship or interacting as though they have stopped along their respective journeys to greet one another; there are also images of individual travelers, often accompanied by animals. The majority of scenes depict interaction between two or more figures: either two people or worshiper and god. The lasting impression conveyed by these images is one of intimate participation in human activity.

Because of its small size, the frieze would require close scrutiny from a viewer who wanted to learn its details, but its visual distance would force him or her to engage with it from a detached perspective, perhaps able only to recognize familiar scenes among the sketches. Prominent features, such as the vertical statue bases and tall buildings, draw the eye's focus, but the overall impression conveyed by the frieze's panoramic image is one of the bustle of daily life, the intimacy of human interaction, and the performance of proper acts of veneration. As is evident from even a quick look at its scenes, the frieze does not present a continuous narrative.

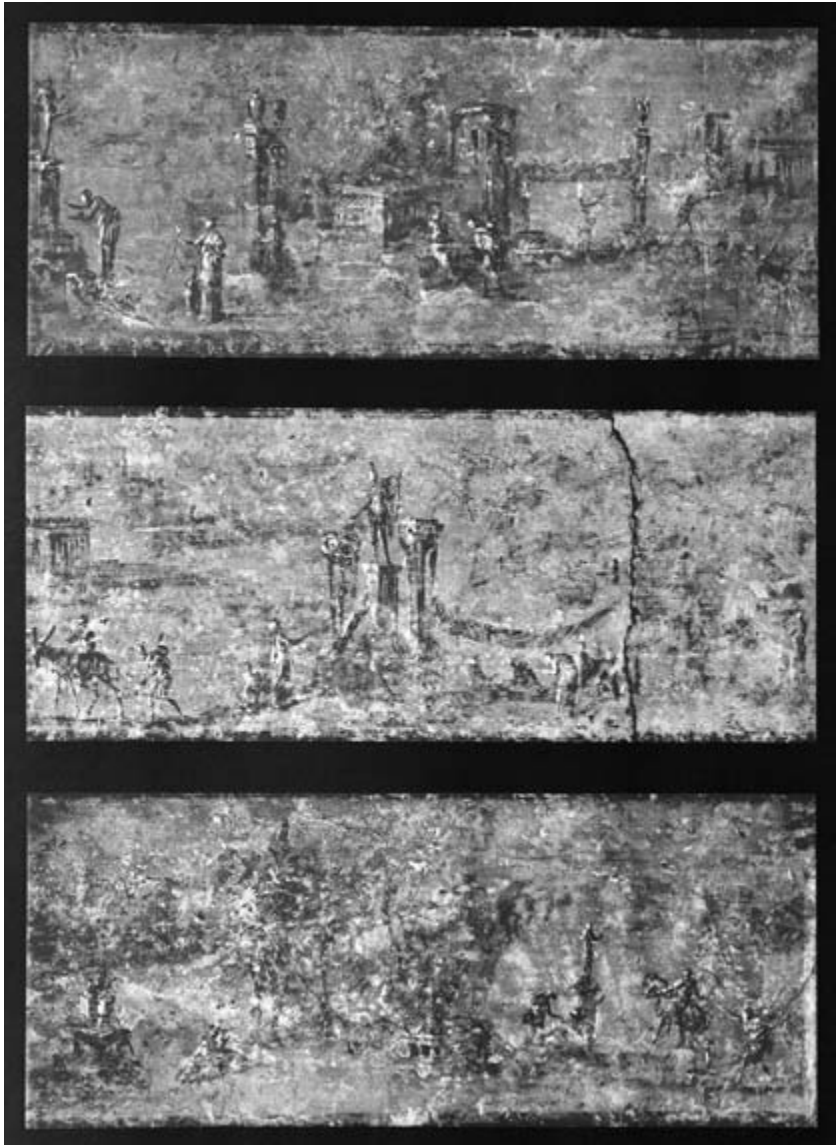


Figure 4. Rome, Palatine, House of Livia, Sala del Monocromo, details of monochromatic frieze painting, first intercolumnium. Ca. 30 BCE. (From Rizzo 1936, plate 5)

Rather, as Leach comments, “juxtapositions of diverse images create the aesthetic rationale of the frieze.”⁷⁹ We might describe its content as a series of individual vignettes, or “instant photographs,” to use Giulio Emanuele Rizzo’s analogy.⁸⁰

If we consider the composition of the frieze panel in figure 4 as a whole, however, the juxtaposition of the individual scenes in a continuous line also suggests movement through space, and thus the animation of the figures depicted. Unlike the sacral-idyllic vignettes, the frieze is not created to suggest to viewers that they are looking out onto a centralized scene, as though through a window, but rather as if they are watching a succession of images unfurl before them. Rizzo suggested that the artist’s principal concern was to show movement within the painted scenes.⁸¹ Leach observed that the depiction of light and shadow within the frieze suggested a progression of movement from left to right, starting at the door to the room, that would cue spectators to follow the landscape images by walking around the room in the same direction.⁸² Thus the appearance of movement by the figures in the frieze may have been paralleled and enhanced by the movement of the external viewer, who, in passing from scene to scene, thus imposed a sort of continuity upon its disconnected vignettes. The effect may have been similar to that of manipulating a flipbook, where a static image appears to move when successive images are flipped in rapid succession. This impression of observing kinetic activity in the frieze’s images should remind us of the emphasis on movement in Tibullus’s fantasy.

Ling writes of the frieze in the House of Livia that “for the first time in genre landscapes space is represented in visually convincing terms,” a reference to the artist’s attempts to show depth of field by rendering images in the background smaller or less precise. He continues, “Yet the unreal colouring, with buildings, trees, statues and figures sketched in strokes of maroon and flecks of creamy-white on the yellow background, produced a ghostly, dream-like effect somewhat akin to that of Japanese prints.”⁸³ Ling’s use of “dream-like” communicates descriptively an essential feature of the panoramic scenes: namely, an internal contradiction between two modes of representation within the image, one that attempts a kind of realism, and another that moves distinctly away from it. The relationship of the individual elements to one another is realistic, while their appearance is surreal, just as we might say is typical of dreams. This dichotomy is also familiar from Tibullus’s fantasy in poem 1.5, in which the activities described are realistic, while the characters chosen to perform these activities are incongruous in the setting in which they appear.

With the images from the House of Livia frieze in mind, let us return to Tibullus 1.5. As we have seen, the poet isolates his fantasy from the rest of his poem by framing it with the verb *fingebam*, thereby also signaling to the reader a

shift between different narrative modes. The repetition of *fingebam* highlights the fantasy as a point of focus within the poem. As a response to the events surrounding it, such as Delia's illness and her defection to another lover, circumstances over which the narrator has no control, the framed fantasy presents not only a diversion for both narrator and reader, but a marked contradiction of content with the outer context of poem 1.5. The frieze panels from the Sala del Monocromo provide a visual model for the use of the frame to isolate an image within a larger context.

The fantasy's detailed scene of Delia hard at work on the farm conveys intimacy on a human scale, such as we observe in her casual interaction with the slave, her formal veneration of the agrarian gods, and her deferential treatment of the visiting Messalla. Specifically, these are scenes of intimacy between two figures from which the dreamer/narrator is excluded. As I have shown, Tibullus's position within the fantasy mimics that of the dreamer and reader: a bystander to the intimate interactions he envisions. Considering the context in which the fantasy is created—Tibullus's vigil over Delia during her illness—Delia's animation and vivacity within the dream provide a striking contrast with the image of her lying ill and unresponsive to treatment. The panels from the House of Livia, although miniature on the walls that display them, stand out precisely because of their contrast with the types of images that surround them.

Elaborating upon Leach's comparative model, I have suggested that we consider Tibullus's depiction of a fantasy, which is made up of a series of rustic scenes, in conjunction with a frieze-style image depicting multiple juxtaposed scenes of rustic landscape. We can gain insight into the visualization of Tibullus's fantasy by investigating the dynamics of viewing suggested by a set of paintings roughly contemporary with his work. We need not, however, think of the paintings from the Sala del Monocromo from the House of Livia as a model for Tibullus in creating his fantasy, nor should these exclude other possible works of visual art that might have enabled a reader to visualize the images of Tibullus's fantasy. The poet's awareness of such visual dynamics would have enhanced his ability to create a convincingly visual account of fantasy, while awareness of the same phenomenon would have increased the reader's ability to envision Tibullus's fantasy as an image.

Fantasy and Mythological Analogy

Just as the frieze paintings from the Sala del Monocromo provide a visual referent for imagining Tibullus's fantasy in poem 1.5, the poet himself provides the reader with an alternative vision of Delia herself just ten lines later. Although his fantastical vision of her disappears as quickly as it was conjured, this

is not her final appearance in the poem. Immediately after his fantasy is shattered, borne by the winds to Armenia (lines 35–36), Tibullus narrates his attempts at forgetting Delia (lines 37–42). These include drowning his sorrows in wine and sleeping with other women. But almost as soon as he has mentioned these new lovers, Delia's image reappears before him, this time in a declaration about the power of her beauty, which he compares in a simile to that of the Nereid Thetis (lines 43–46). We now turn to the similarities between the poet's active creation of a fantasy and his selection of this particular mythological analogy as complementary modes for articulating his relationship with Delia in visual terms.

Mythological analogies are frequent in the works of the other elegists, Propertius and Ovid, who often use an exemplum from mythology to draw attention to the beauty of their lovers and elevate them to iconic status.⁸⁴ This use of a mythological analogy for Delia (lines 45–46) is unique in Tibullus's corpus, and for that reason alone it warrants more attention than it generally receives in analyses of poem 1.5. I suggest that we can understand its placement in this poem specifically in relation to the fantasy that precedes it. Like the fantasy, the mythological analogy presents an image of the poet and Delia that is, on the surface, incongruous with its external circumstances. The simile is placed between distinct references to the negative consequences of the *discidium*: namely, Tibullus's unsuccessful dalliances with other women and the intervention of the cruel *lena*. As Putnam notes, "The analogy presents once more a wish in past time,"⁸⁵ thus recalling the fantasy. In both cases, the harsh juxtaposition of image with surrounding context serves to underscore the image's meaninglessness while increasing its indelibility.

The poet uses the mythological analogy to illustrate his response to accusations from other women that he has been enchanted by Delia and rendered impotent: "tunc me discedens devotum femina dixit / et pudet et narrat scire nefanda meam" ("then, leaving, the woman said I had been cursed, and, ashamed, she spreads the word that my girl knows evil arts," lines 41–42). Tibullus admits that Delia has cast a spell over him, but contradicts accusations that it is a traditional verbal spell. Rather, he claims that her power over him is visual in nature: he is spellbound by her beauty, which he characterizes by reference to specific parts of her body: "non facit hoc verbis, facie tenerisque lacertis / devovet et flavis nostra puella comis" ("she does not do this with words, but rather my girl bewitches me with her beauty, slender arms and tawny hair," lines 43–44). Thus Tibullus prefaces the simile of lines 45–46 with a contrast between words (*verbis*), specifically curses imbued with the power to harm the person toward whom they are directed, and aspects of physical beauty (*facie*, *lacertis*, and *comis*) that affect the viewer as though he had been cursed. If we limit our interpretation of the simile to its immediate context, it seems that the memory of Delia's physical beauty debilitates the

poet at the precise moment that he is trying to extricate himself from its hold: that is, when he is with another woman.⁸⁶ But we could also say that the supremacy of the visual (Delia's beauty) over the verbal (curses), which is reinforced by the image of Thetis suggested by the simile, echoes the power of the visual images conveyed by the fantasy, whose original articulation in words (*vota*) proved to have no effect.

To express to the reader the power of Delia's beauty, Tibullus compares her to Thetis, the Nereid mother of Achilles: "talīs ad Haemonium Nereis Peleā quondam / vecta est frenato caerulea pisce Thetis" ("such was the sea-blue Nereid Thetis, who once was drawn to Haemonian Peleus on a bridled fish," lines 45–46). The only reference to Thetis's appearance is the adjective *caerulea*, perhaps suggesting that she is imbued with the color of the sea or that she has sea-blue eyes.⁸⁷ Just two lines earlier Tibullus had used the adjective *flavus* to describe Delia's hair (*flavis comis*, line 44). To underscore the comparison between Delia and Thetis within the context of the simile, Tibullus echoes the description of Delia's hair with a reference to some aspect of Thetis's appearance.⁸⁸ Beyond this adjective, however, the simile does not actually describe the physical details of Thetis's beauty. Rather, the intent of the comparison is to communicate the effect of Delia's beauty upon Tibullus.

Perhaps the mere mention of Thetis's name is sufficient to connote beauty and sexual allure that would overpower most mortal men. As Bright has observed, "The comparison with a goddess also shows the folly of his hopes, even as it explains why he had dared to entertain them."⁸⁹ Catullus had called Thetis *pulcherrima* in poem 64 (line 28), and his description may have been present in the minds of Tibullus's readers. In addition to the features of Delia's appearance mentioned explicitly (*facie*, *lacertis*, and *comis*), the analogy might suggest Delia's beauty particularly in the nude. Noting the frequent mention of Thetis as nude in Latin poetry (Catullus, for example, describes Thetis and her Nereid companions as "nudato corpore . . . nutricum tenus," 64.17–18) and citing instances in which the other elegists use mythological analogies to evoke images of their lovers nude, Jean Soubiran suggests that Tibullus refers to the particular power of the memory of Delia nude, which spellbinds him as he lies in bed with another woman.⁹⁰ In any case, it is certain that Delia's beauty is not mentioned merely for its own sake, but rather to make a statement about its almost magical power over Tibullus.

Of equal interest, then, is what the analogy reveals about the dynamics of interaction between Thetis and her mortal lover, Peleus, as analogues for Delia and Tibullus.⁹¹ Peleus is a nonparticipant in the scene described in the simile; he merely watches as the goddess is conveyed to him on the back of a dolphin, and his presence is indicated only as the endpoint of the action of the verb *vecta est*. Peleus's

absence from the scene suggests two links to the story of Delia and Tibullus. As Delia lay inaccessible to Tibullus in her fevered sleep, creating alienation between the lovers, so too does the image of the simile capture a moment of distance between the lovers Peleus and Thetis. Just as he was in the fantasy of Delia working on the farm, Tibullus is again marginal to the action in this scene and participates only as a viewer. Of course, the imminent union of Peleus and Thetis is suggested by the prepositional phrase “ad Haemonium Pelea,” but the simile suspends the pair in a moment before their inevitable union. This delay is reinforced by the postponement of the name “Thetis” to final position in line 46.

The reader’s appreciation of the various connotations of the Peleus and Thetis comparison would certainly have been enhanced by an ability to fill in the context for this moment in their story from other visual and textual sources. One such source would have been representations of Thetis in visual art, where images of Nereids riding atop marine creatures, usually hippocamps or Tritons rather than dolphins, abound.⁹² The example shown in figure 5 is typical for this subject: in this fresco from the Villa Arianna at Stabiae, the Nereid is sexually alluring, with her nude body displayed frontally for the viewer. The position of the seated Nereid as a rider on the hippocamp, with her legs extended to the viewer’s left as though almost slipping from the hippocamp’s back, suggests her movement through the water, thus hinting that she has been caught in the frame temporarily, in the midst of transport. The viewer is to enjoy her beauty while she lingers before continuing on her journey. This sense of voyeurism is also conveyed in Tibullus’s analogy, which the poet uses to comment upon his status as a viewer enthralled by the apparition of Delia that interrupts his attempts to forget her.

J. P. Elder was content to take the comparison between Delia and Thetis at face value, stating that “the image does not draw us on and on with suggestive powers, but keeps our thoughts just where Tibullus wishes them kept. Thetis is in fact an illustration.”⁹³ By contrast, I would argue that because of its suggestion of Thetis’s movement toward Peleus, via the very act of “drawing on” (*vehere*) that Elder eschews, the analogy hints precisely at the aftermath of this visual encounter without mentioning it explicitly, thus prompting the reader to envision the subsequent narrative of the story of Peleus and Thetis. As is typical for a reader’s response to a mythological reference, it would be almost impossible not to have other accounts and images of the tale in mind. The very act of comprehending the comparison (Thetis) as a parallel scenario for the referent (Delia) has already demanded an initial process of visual layering, as we saw with the similes of the snow and the milk in *Amores* 3.5. Naturally, having no experiential reference point for the mythological scene described, a reader’s only recourse is to familiar touchstones from either visual art or literature.



Figure 5. Stabiae, Villa Arianna, detail of fresco depicting a Nereid riding a sea creature. Second half of first century CE. Museo Archeologico di Napoli. (Courtesy of the Soprintendenza per i Beni Archeologici di Napoli, inv. 8859)

Some critics have suggested that in creating this comparison, Tibullus indeed had in mind the meeting of Peleus and Thetis and their subsequent marriage. Paul Murgatroyd, for example, writes, “Most obviously this pictorial exemplum refers to Delia’s beauty, but the unwillingness of Thetis in many accounts suggests Tibullus’s present difficulties with Delia.”⁹⁴ Murgatroyd is referring here to Thetis’s initial resistance to marriage with the mortal Peleus, which, in the versions of Ovid (*Met.* 11.211–65) and Valerius Flaccus (*Arg.* 1.130–33), is the culmination of this unwilling transport to Peleus’s cave.⁹⁵ In a similar vein, Fritz-Heiner Mutschler suggests thinking about the larger narrative of this story in order to establish its relevance in the context of the poem. He imagines instead that Tibullus has in mind the eventual union of Peleus and Thetis, rather than her resistance to it. In particular, he reads in the analogy evidence for the elegiac narrator’s propensity for self-deception by creating illusions.⁹⁶ This tendency was, of course, evident in the earlier fantasy, which offered an illusory image of harmony between Delia and Tibullus in an imaginary landscape. In both cases, the reader is aware of the sheer impossibility of this union given the circumstances presented in the poem, a feature that provides an additional link between the narrator’s two acts of visualization.

Tibullus follows his simile with the phrase “haec nocuere mihi,” which begins line 47 and is followed by a strong caesura. This phrase and its placement must recall for the reader the similar phrase “haec mihi fingebam” from the beginning

of line 35, which signaled the end of the description of the fantasy.⁹⁷ In line 35, the word *haec* directs the reader backward to the fantasy (*vota*) just recounted. So too, the repetition of *haec*, following directly upon the analogy in line 47, suggests that it refers back to what the poet has just described—namely, the fact that his attempts to forget Delia have been rendered futile because his memory of her beauty, which looms up like a revenant even after their separation, still has control over him, and renders him bewitched (*devotum*). In both cases the phrases containing *haec* allow the reader to pause and contemplate the preceding image of Delia, thus suggesting a parallel between fantasy and analogy as modes for visualization.⁹⁸ In this capacity the deictic *haec* functions in a manner similar to the frame of a painting, which focuses the viewer's gaze. Structurally, the phrases "haec mihi fingebam" (line 35) and "haec nocuere mihi" (line 47) mark an end to the visualization of Delia transformed and return the reader to the grim reality of the separation. Both the fantasy and the simile are the poet's responses to his separation from Delia, and in both Delia becomes progressively alienated from him. While the fantasy creates an active presence for Delia that counteracts her inaccessibility across the boundary of consciousness created by her illness, the simile creates an image of Delia (as Thetis) moving toward the poet, while in reality she has left him for another man.

Like the image of the fantasy, the analogy presents the poet's creation of an idealized depiction of Delia in which her action is the center and he is at the periphery. As is typical of mythological analogies, Tibullus's invocation of Thetis here creates an alternative perspective on its referent that appeals to the reader's familiarity with elements of this very scene in other literary and visual contexts. The choice of a pictorial comparison serves also to underscore the fact that Delia's power over Tibullus is visual in nature. As she is able to enchant the poet with her beauty and thus arrest the narration of his attempt at detachment from her power by recalling and reenacting the very nature of the power of her beauty, the poet in turn creates with his visual analogy a moment in which the reader is forced to confront Delia's beauty by envisioning it through an alternative mode of representation. Memory of Delia's beauty immobilizes Tibullus and captivates him in the act of viewing, in the same way that the simile lifts the reader from the narrative of the poem and holds him or her in the grasp of this comparison.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have attempted to establish the relevance of reading Tibullus's fantasy in poem 1.5 as a creative act that enables the poet to imagine a fictional narrative and convey it to his reader by way of a vivid description, rather than as simply another wish for an unattainable ideal. An additional goal

has been to suggest a parallel between envisioning the images of the fantasy and viewing the frieze-style landscape paintings popular during the period in which Tibullus composed his poems. Finally, I have demonstrated a connection between the fantasy of lines 21–34 and the mythological analogy of lines 43–46 as complementary modes for envisioning the transformation of Delia across the boundary of separation. By using the theoretical model of rhetorical *phantasia* to approach my analysis of the fantasy, I hope to have demonstrated the value of reading Tibullus's fantasy in poem 1.5 as a visual experience transferred to the reader (and to Delia) in a manner that encourages both visualization and emotional response. Although it does not achieve the desired effect of changing Delia's resolve at the level of the narrative, the narrator's rearticulation of his fantasy creates an enduring image for the poem's reader that is both powerful and suggestive in its prominence within the poem.

I have avoided conflating fantasy and dream in my discussion of Tibullus 1.5. To be sure, the fact that the narration of the fantasy is marked not once but twice as the creation of the narrator, rather than as something experienced involuntarily, sets it apart from its dream counterparts. But perhaps this designation of a fantasy as a creative act simply admits to something that is implicit in all dream accounts: the process of translation from involuntary visual image to self-reflexive textual narrative demands the dream narrator's creative intervention in recounting what he has seen in a way that is communicable to a listener or reader. Like the dreams that will be the focus of the subsequent chapters, the fantasy of poem 1.5 expresses a fictional scene in a self-contained narrative whose content is contradicted by some aspect of an external "reality." Its framing within the narrative, its attention to the kinetic and visual details of the scene it describes, and its positioning of the "dreamer" within the narrative as a detached viewer rather than a participant are all features that distinguish the fantasy from other expressions of wish in Tibullus's poetry (such as those in 1.1.43–48 and 1.1.71–74) and also align it more closely with the narratives of actual dreams. The similarity between fantasy and dream is particularly evident in their retrospective narration, signaled by verbs in the past tense, in which the narrator acknowledges a degree of reflection upon the relationship between the images of the fantasy and the circumstances of his waking life. In similar fashion, the inclusion of an analogy, which marks with the word *talis* the (uncharacteristic) intrusion of the poet's commentary on his own situation with a reference to the world of myth, encourages the reader to envision several connections between referent and image. Let us keep in mind the similarities between fantasy, dream, and simile explored in the preceding pages as we turn in the next chapter to the role of mythological analogy as a mode for visual expression in the context of a vivid nightmare.



3 Transforming the Lover

Nightmare, Commentary, and Image in Propertius 2.26a

In chapter 2 I interpreted Tibullus's vain wish for a shared life with Delia on the farm as a fantasy in which the poet conjured for his reader a vivid image of the lovers' interaction that contrasted starkly with the rest of the poem. By translating his internal imaginative process into words, I argued, the poet offered up his fantasy as something to be seen, thus transforming his readers into viewers, a perspective suggested by the role of the poet in his own fantasy. The fantasy of Tibullus 1.5, while distinct from a dream, is an important counterpart to the dream accounts of Latin elegy. The similarity between the narration of a fantasy and the description of a dream is particularly evident in their evocation of pictorial imagery and the placement of the creator of the fantasy or the dreamer on the periphery of the scene he describes.

The juxtaposition of fantasy and simile in Tibullus 1.5 allowed the reader to compare these poetic devices as a means by which the poet created a transformed image of his lover. The fact that the abstraction of Delia via the Thetis simile followed so closely upon the poet's articulated fantasy of her presented to the reader an opportunity to reconsider the image of Delia in the fantasy in light of the simile: their proximity suggested and enabled connections between the two images. In this chapter I explore the role of simile in Propertius's description of his nightmare in poem 2.26a, with particular attention to the ability of a simile to suggest and evoke visual images of a scene as we analyze the poet's transformation of his lover, Cynthia, through references from mythology as he describes and comments upon her appearance in a dream.

Like Tibullus in the fantasy of poem 1.5, Propertius in his dream watches his lover from a detached position, thus creating an image of the lover as an alienated

observer of, rather than a participant in, the scene he describes. The dreamer's stance within the poem is reflected in his second role as retrospective observer in describing his nightmare. By recounting his lover's distress in pictorial terms that recall the modes used by painters to make their work visually captivating, and by selecting mythological exempla that were also popular in visual art, Propertius encourages his readers to comprehend the content of his dream as though they were viewers. By deviating from familiar compositions, however, he evokes for his readers a variety of images depicting a lover as the helpless observer of the scene he or she witnesses.

Dream and Commentary in Propertius 2.26a

The twenty lines of poetry that I will refer to as Propertius's elegy 2.26a present an account of a nightmare told in the first person, the first of three detailed descriptions of the poet's dreams in his corpus of poems.¹ This twenty-line section makes up an intact coherent sense unit at the beginning of the otherwise fragmentary poem 2.26. Editors have offered various solutions for resolving the poem's textual difficulties,² but even those who advocate for its unity acknowledge the first twenty lines as self-contained.³ By excluding the remainder of poem 2.26 from my analysis, it is not my intention to prove that these lines were never, at some point, part of a larger poem; rather, consideration of the possible thematic connections between the sea imagery in both the dream and the later lines of the poem is simply unnecessary for the detailed analysis of the poet's mode of dream description in the pages to follow. From the point of view of this book, it is the poem's affinity with other dream descriptions in the elegiac corpus that forms its most important connections.

In poem 2.26a Propertius both describes a nightmare of his lover on the brink of drowning in the sea after a shipwreck and offers a commentary upon his memory of this disturbing vision. He provides no prelude to the dream at the poem's outset, nor does he offer an interpretation of it at the poem's end. Rather, the dream and the poem, and thus the reader's engagement with these, are contained within identical parameters. But that is not to say that the narrator does not provide some perspective on his dream. In fact, integral to the poem's structure are the narrator's shifts between description of the dream's images and his commentary on them. Using narratological terminology, we might see these as shifts between extradiegetic and intradiegetic levels of narration.⁴

These transitions between narrating the dream image and articulating points of reference for it create incoherence within the poem. One result of this narrative disjointedness is that it makes the poem recognizably dreamlike. But while the

narrator's commentaries disrupt the poem's narrative continuity, the images they evoke work in concert to bring the reader into another world that is at once abstracted from and parallel to the dream itself. By evoking three unrelated but compatible stories from the realm of mythology—the stories of Phrixus and Helle, Glaucus and the Nereids, and Arion and the dolphin—Propertius as commentator creates a world that mirrors and refracts the central image of Cynthia drowning.

Propertius's use of the sea as the setting for his dream and the referents he creates for his dream's central image have additional significance. The sea is itself populated by hybrid and transformed creatures and is thus a logical context in which to "transform" Cynthia by way of analogy into various sea dwellers. The concept of metamorphosis extends beyond the action of the dream. By playing upon the idea that the dreamed image can seem like a metamorphosis of something familiar from the dreamer's waking reality, Propertius uses the context of the sea to convert the reader into a viewer and to translate the description of a dream into a series of visual images.

Entering a Dreamland

Let us begin by examining a modern commentary that highlights the similar experiences of dreaming and looking at paintings. Describing the ancient viewer's engagement with the painting depicting the Cyclops Polyphemus wooing the sea nymph Galatea, which appeared on the west wall of a small room in the Roman villa at Boscotrecase (figure 6), painted sometime after 11 BCE, Peter H. von Blanckenhagen writes:

As he approached it, there emerged, as though from the deep sea, the mirage of a romantic landscape inhabited by two familiar figures from a charming fairy tale. But soon he found himself in a different world where nothing happened but everything seemed possible. Released from the rules of his own experience he followed the signposts of a new order. So guided he did not lose his way but willingly and confidently entered a dreamland, an enchanted world, himself enchanted and dreaming.⁵

Admittedly, this statement imposes upon the ancient viewer a reaction that is unknowable and unverifiable by a modern one, but it suggests some connections between the viewer's perception of the elements of the painting's composition and some features familiar from the experience of dreaming. Von Blanckenhagen is describing a painting whose style (like that of its counterpart on the opposite wall depicting Andromeda's rescue by Perseus) blends elements of landscape and



Figure 6. Villa at Boscotrecase, fresco showing Polyphemus and Galatea, from the Mythological Room (19). Late first century BCE. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. (Photo © The Metropolitan Museum of Art)

mythological painting, using a type of composition that had not been expressed in wall painting up to this point.⁶

The world in which “nothing happened but everything seemed possible” is the world of the painted image, a realm that suggests in static representation a mythological narrative and permits the viewer to extrapolate that narrative from the frozen moment it presents. Von Blanckenhagen calls this an “indeterminate landscape.”⁷ And indeed, the lack of defined boundaries within the image suggests a world composed of familiar elements presented in an unfamiliar way. Additionally, the appearance of two scenes from different episodes in Polyphemus’s tale within the same frame affords simultaneous perspectives upon two stages of his story. In the foreground, the Cyclops courts his would-be lover Galatea; in the background, he hurls a boulder at the ship of Odysseus. In both cases he negotiates from his narrow crag with an opponent who remains at a distance from him at sea. This juxtaposition, which creates not a narrative, but rather a “shock of recognition”⁸ of disparate elements from Polyphemus’s tale, has a dreamlike ability to collapse linear time. Finally, the ability of the image to absorb the viewer with its self-contained presentation of familiar elements beside fantastical conceptions is akin to the sleeper’s experience of absorption in a dream. As with a dream, the moment of absorption is temporary: looking away from the painting, the viewer realizes that he or she has been captivated by the illusion of another world within the context of a flat wall.

Although painted several years after Propertius wrote his description of a nightmare in poem 2.26a, the image of Polyphemus looking out to sea at his beloved Galatea, who is perched atop her dolphin at a tantalizingly close distance, offers an obvious corollary to the content of the poem, in which the poet observes from the confines of the shore his lover nearly drowning at sea before her sudden rescue by a dolphin. But the viewing dynamics described by von Blanckenhagen are also relevant to our understanding of the poet’s mode of description in the context of the dream. The intensity of the viewer’s engagement with the image contained within the frame is similar to that required of the reader of poem 2.26a, whom the poet engages immediately as a viewer of his scene. This technique is not exclusive to poem 2.26a, nor is it the sole purview of dream descriptions, as a brief digression to an earlier poem of Propertius demonstrates.

In the well-known opening couplets of poem 1.3, the poet describes returning home to find Cynthia asleep, prefacing his revelation of her appearance with three similes of mythological heroines asleep:

qualis Thesea iacuit cedente carina
 languida desertis Cnosia litoribus;

qualis et accubuit primo Cepheia somno
libera iam duris cotibus Andromede;
nec minus assiduis Edonis fessa choreis 5
qualis in herboso concidit Apidano:
talis visa mihi mollem spirare quietem
Cynthia non certis nixa caput manibus,
ebria cum multo traherem vestigia Baccho,
et quaterent sera nocte facem pueri. 10

[Just as Cnossian Ariadne lay limp on the deserted shores while Theseus's ship departed; just as Cepheian Andromeda, too, lay in first sleep after she was freed from the hard stone; no different than the Bacchant exhausted from her unceasing dances as she lay upon the grassy banks of the Apidanus: so too did Cynthia appear to breathe gentle sleep with her head supported upon uncertain hands, when I came upon her, dragging drunken footsteps, and the boys were shaking their torches in the deep night.]

As numerous commentators have demonstrated, not only do the similes of lines 1–6 evoke images from visual art that depicted these same sleepers, but they also place these women on display as visual objects under the gaze of the internal viewer, who in turn models a viewing position for the reader.⁹ By beginning with three graphic images of mythological characters asleep, the poet immediately sets his poem in an alternative realm. When in line 7 he claims that the sleeping Cynthia appeared like these women, the reader already has in mind the visual images of the mythological scenes as paradigms for viewing her. Like the image of the landscape that “emerges” like a “mirage” for the viewer of the Boscotrecase painting (figure 6), the image of Cynthia comes into the reader’s view in the context of images from mythology and visual art. “Following the rules of this new world,” so to speak, the reader envisions the interaction between poet and lover through the veneer of paradigms from mythology.

Poem 1.3 provides us with an account of viewing that, I would argue, seems strikingly like the account of a person “entering a dreamland, himself enchanted and dreaming,” to borrow von Blanckenhagen’s terms. The poem’s introductory lines, although they do not describe an actual dream, could be called dreamlike in their blurring of the experiences of observing the lover and looking at a work of visual art.¹⁰ As the vivid similes of lines 1–6 connect Cynthia to the realm of myth, the participle *visa* (line 7), the very verb form often used to begin a dream description, suggests a similarity between her appearance and that of a dream. By introducing Cynthia to the reader through the filter of similes, the poet establishes at

the outset that his perception of her at the moment of his return wavers between fantasy and reality, creating an overlay of static image and breathing lover.

The importance of poem 1.3 as a precedent for the dynamics of poem 2.26a has not been fully explored, although Barbara Flaschenriem has suggested a link between the poems in terms of the way in which “Cynthia’s vulnerability . . . heightens her appeal” in both.¹¹ As Hérica Valladares has shown, the similes in poem 1.3 do more than simply suggest a visual corollary for Cynthia’s pose; rather, they convey a paradigm for visual interaction between the poem’s lovers, Propertius and Cynthia.¹² The switch between fantasy and reality suggested by the interplay between mythological heroine and the poet’s lover has an important counterpart in poem 2.26a, where myth, painting, desire, and fantasy converge in the context of a dream. By using mythology to create another world in which to view his lover and by evoking, in particular, artistic representations of these myths, with the visual language of his analogies, the poet utilizes mythological analogy as a way to suggest the altered state in which he views his lover. In the case of poem 1.3, it is the excitement of voyeurism aided by inebriation, while in poem 2.26a it is the dreamscape that allows for the poet’s particular viewing experience.

Introduction to the Dream Narration

Poem 2.26a unfolds entirely in the dreamscape. It begins with the dreamer’s act of viewing the first images of the dream and ends as these images are dispersed with the dreamer’s waking. Line 1 begins: “vidi te in somnis fracta, mea vita, carina,” while line 20 reads, “cum mihi discussit talia visa metus.” Advocates for reading 2.26a as an individual poem often cite the repeated forms of the verb *videre* (*vidi*, line 1, and *visa*, line 20) as markers that contain the imagery of the dreamscape as they refer to the very way in which the dreamer engages with it: through vision.¹³ He both “sees” (*vidi*) the dream and recalls it for his readers as “things seen” (*visa*).¹⁴ The verb *vidi* itself has a double function: it both introduces the narration of a dream and describes what Propertius is doing as an actor in his dream. Thus with the initial verb *vidi*, Propertius immediately transports his readers into the realm of the dream and simultaneously introduces them to his experience of it.

The poet does not prepare his reader for the dream by describing the circumstances of his sleep or the external context in which the dream occurred. This technique contrasts with that adopted by the poet of *Amores* 3.5, which, as we recall, establishes prior to the dream description the circumstances under which the dream occurred: “nox erat et somnus lassos submitit ocellos; / terruerunt animum

talia visa meum” (lines 1–2). In fact, coming to poem 2.26a directly from its predecessor, 2.25, a reader would have in mind the opposite of sleep and dreams, as that poem ends with the admonitory image of the lover *prevented* from sleeping: “cum satis una tuis insomnia portet ocellis, / una sat est cuivis femina multa mala” (“since one woman is enough to keep you awake at night, one woman brings enough grief to any man,” lines 47–48). The lingering image of sleeplessness from the earlier poem would make the appearance of the dream in poem 2.26a seem even more sudden to the reader.

This sense of unanticipated immersion into the events of the dream is appropriate, considering that its first image is that of Cynthia drowning in the sea after a shipwreck. Even though the shipwreck is mentioned in the poem’s first line (“fracta . . . carina”), thus providing a cause for Cynthia’s predicament, there is no explanation for her presence on a ship in mid-sea, nor any reference to whether she is leaving or returning to Rome. As becomes obvious, narrative background is irrelevant in this kind of dream; rather, emotional intensity is increased by the urgency of the moment it depicts.

By introducing his poem with *vidi* (“I saw,” line 1), Propertius boldly declares that what follows will recount the narrator’s visual experience. Immediately the reader is primed for the performance of a difficult but familiar poetic task—that of rendering the visual in verbal terms. Furthermore, the prominent position of *vidi* at the beginning of the first line emphasizes the speaker’s subjectivity—providing his perspective upon what he himself saw at some point in the past. The verb focuses the reader directly upon the dreamer’s action without the buffer of a context for this action. Beyond its primary meaning, which immediately signals to the reader that the content to follow constitutes a vision of some sort, the verb’s person, voice, and line position have additional significance for our understanding of the poet’s mode of narration.

A poem’s first word, especially if it is a verb or a noun, often bears a particular significance for the reader’s engagement with the poem. The reader beginning Propertius’s collection, for example, encounters as the first word of the first poem of the first book the name “Cynthia,” whose importance as his lover and as the emblem of his writing and his creative impulse will be developed throughout the corpus of poems.¹⁵ The emphasis upon Cynthia’s name is parallel to her function as the subject of the poem’s first verb (*cepit*), which communicates her dominance over the narrator, presented as the object of the verb (*me*), thus adding extra significance to the conspicuous placement of her name. Furthermore, it is possible to surmise from references in poem 2.24.2 and in Martial’s epigram 14.189 that at least the entire first book was referred to by the name “Cynthia,” demonstrating

the possible application of the first word as a shorthand for the dominant theme of an entire poetry collection. The following examples show how Propertius elsewhere uses the opening words of poems to create particular effects.

Poem 2.26a is one of a very select group of poems by Propertius whose first word is an active, finite verb in the first person singular.¹⁶ Though rare, this usage allows Propertius to give the reader immediate and seemingly privileged access to the intimately subjective perspective for which elegy is valued. Other than 2.26a, the rest of the corpus boasts only three poems that begin with first-person singular verbs. The second of Propertius's three dream descriptions, poem 3.3, the poet's dream of his own poetic initiation, begins with the passive *visus eram* (line 1). The significance of this opening verb will be discussed in detail in the next chapter. Poem 1.9, by comparison, opens with the first-person *dicebam*, where the imperfect tense suggests the narrator's repeated admonitions to Ponticus and thus links the poem with his previous address to Ponticus in poem 1.7, providing a sense of narrative continuity within the book and inviting the reader into this conversation between friends and rivals, as though the reader too shared that intimacy. The last example comes from poem 3.10, where the imperfect *mirabar* suggests not repetitive action, but a meditative state of wonder at a vision of the Muses, who appear like dream visitors at his bedside in the red dawn: "*mirabar, quidnam visissent mane Camenae, / ante meum stantes sole rubente torum*" ("I wondered why the Muses had visited me in the morning, when at the first red of dawn they stood before my bed," lines 1–2). Thus in three of the four instances where we can establish with confidence the poem's first line (poems 2.26a, 3.3, and 3.10), the first-person verb describes an experience of looking followed by a vivid description of what is seen. Boucher linked poem 3.10 with the dream poems 2.26a and 3.3 in his list of poems that give the impression that Propertius is following a "pictorial model" for his imagery.¹⁷

Let us look at poem 3.10 more closely. The poet's choice of *mirabar* is a notable departure from the more common use of *videre* in the active voice to refer to an epiphany of a god.¹⁸ As J. H. W. Morwood observed about the poem's first line, "The muzzy, slow-moving cogitation of verse 1—the poet's brain needs time to think out what he sees—is reflected in the use of the imperfect *mirabar* and the deliberating *quidnam*."¹⁹ It is not clear whether the poet is asleep or awake when the Muses appear to him in lines 1 and 2. He is still in his bed (*meum torum*) and the sun is only just rising (*sole rubente*), suggesting that if he is awake, he is just surfacing from sleep. In poem 3.3 Propertius had described seeing the Muses in an actual dream (lines 34–38). By recounting this personal vision of the Muses, here the native *Camenae*, so closely after the earlier description of his dream, Propertius suggests a connection between the viewing contexts for each appearance of the

Muses, dream and vision, respectively. The poet reinforces the connection between these contexts by beginning poem 3.10 with the first-person *mirabar*, which recalls the beginning of poem 3.3 with *visus eram*, itself suggesting an appearance (this time of the poet himself atop Mount Helicon) over which the viewer has no control.

The use of the verb *mirari* is not unusual in Propertius's poetry; in fact, the following poem, 3.11, begins with the question "quid mirare, meam si versat femina vitam" ("Why wonder that a woman controls my life . . .?"). The phrase *quid mirare* as used here is an almost formulaic way of suggesting the inevitability of what follows by dismissing the potential for uncertainty about it.²⁰ But *mirabar* in poem 3.10 implies more than the narrator's uncertainty about why the Muses have appeared. To be sure, the poet questions why they have come to him on that day, but more than that, he marvels at the Muses' sudden appearance and, as the subsequent indirect question indicates, he then wonders why they have come. As he wonders about the reason for their visit, he lingers for two lines over their appearance, taking in the scene with his gaze before describing the gesture of their hand-clapping and the sound it creates. It is as though he reassures himself and his reader that this encounter really did occur by engaging in an extended description of it.

While the verb *mirabar* in 3.10.1 refers to a visual experience about which the narrator feels uncertainty and wonder, the verb *vidi*, which opens poem 2.26a, referring strictly to visual perception rather than wonder, would seem to suggest the opposite. The association between *vidi* and verifiable visual perception is corroborated by a survey of the poet's special use of this verb elsewhere in his poetry. In his commentary on poem 2.26a, S. J. Heyworth notes that there are five other instances in which Propertius begins a line (none at the start of a poem) with *vidi*.²¹ In each case *vidi* is followed by the pronoun *ego*, in the position of an enclitic. The elision between the words unifies *vidi* and *ego*, and thus makes the sound of the entire phrase (rather than simply the individual juxtaposed words) familiar to the listener as a unit, just as the image of the words together unites them in the reader's visual field.²² A look at one example of this usage indicates that Propertius uses this collocation to emphasize the speaker's conviction about what he claims to have seen.²³

In poem 1.13, for example, the phrase *vidi ego* appears in anaphora at the beginning of successive lines to contrast vision with hearing as modes for obtaining reliable information. In this elegy, the narrator confronts his friend Gallus, who finds himself in the same desperate situation for which he had earlier mocked the narrator: Gallus has fallen in love with a *puella* and is completely under her command; this servitude is his punishment for scorning other lovers, as we learn

in lines 1–12. In lines 13–15, the poet wants to prove how he knows the seriousness of his friend's predicament: "haec ego non rumore malo, non augure doctus; / vidi ego: me quaeso teste negare potes? / vidi ego te toto vinctum languescere collo" ("I have learned these things not from wicked rumor, nor from prophecy; rather, I saw [them]: can you deny it, I ask, when I was a witness? I saw you lying there, with her arms bound about your neck"). The repetition of *vidi ego* reinforces the indelibility of his proof: it comes not from rumor he has heard, but rather from firsthand viewing of his friend Gallus in the embrace of a lover, a scene the poet goes on to describe as Gallus's deathlike swoon (lines 16–18). Possession of this visual proof lends legitimacy to the advice he offers in the remainder of the poem.

In using the phrase *vidi ego* specifically to demonstrate that autopsy connotes authority, Propertius draws upon the precedents of didactic poetry and oratory, in which the verb (with and without *ego*) is used to bolster a narrator's claim.²⁴ In his commentary on books 1 and 2 of Vergil's *Georgics*, R. F. Thomas comments on four instances in which *videre* is used in the first person (singular and plural) to communicate the speaker's authority on some aspect of farming that the reader would otherwise have to take on faith.²⁵ Noting that the singular form *vidi* occurs only three times in the *Georgics* (at 1.193, 1.197, and 1.318), Thomas comments that "this is not autobiographical, but didactic, emphatically asserting the veracity of the detail which follows."²⁶

In poem 2.26a Propertius reinterprets for his own purposes the verb *vidi*, which was familiar from didactic poetry to introduce objective experience and from his own precedent in poem 1.13 as an indicator of authority based on autopsy. By beginning the poem with *vidi* in emphatic position, he appropriates it to exert the primacy of autopsy in the dream experience, a viewing experience unique to the dreamer. The use of the verb in collocation with *te* rather than the expected (and unemphatic) *ego* jolts the reader and forces him or her to confront a second person (soon to be revealed as Cynthia) right away, just as the viewer within the dream does. Unlike the phrase *vidi ego* elsewhere, the statement introduced by *vidi* in 2.26a.1 does not comment or elaborate upon previous examples; nor does it seek to reassure a reader with an example of common experience or to guarantee the speaker's authority. Rather, *vidi* introduces the description of a personal vision that will mingle dreamed image with mythological tale—in effect, the opposite of an experience that is objectively verifiable. By using a phrase familiar from autopsy to introduce a dream, as opposed to the more familiar passive form of the verb *videre*, Propertius points out the paradox inherent in dreaming: although the content of a dream is never outwardly verifiable, the dream seems real to the dreamer as he or she experiences it. The realization of this paradox is what the narrator of a dream attempts to recapture in his telling.

The poet's appropriation of the appeal to a common, objective viewing experience suggested by *vidi* (*ego*) is further complicated when the verb is qualified by the phrase *in somnis*, containing the ablative plural of the noun *somnus*. This ablative phrase informs the reader of the context for the narrator's act of viewing and thus qualifies this instance as a specific type of viewing: that which occurs in a dream. Thus it is usually translated into English with the phrase "in a dream," rather than "in sleep."²⁷ As Einar Löfstedt observes, the phrase *in somno* would have fit the line metrically, and the ablative *somno* is used elsewhere by Propertius to refer to the circumstance of sleep.²⁸ In poem 1.3, for example, the poet describes Andromeda relaxed in sleep after her rescue by Perseus: "qualis et accubuit primo Cepheia somno / libera iam duris cotibus Andromede" ("just as Andromeda, daughter of Cepheus, lay in first sleep, now free from the hard stone," lines 3–4). But as Löfstedt goes on to demonstrate, Propertius in poem 2.26a is following standard usage of the plural to refer to the experience or content of a dream, rather than simply the state of sleep.²⁹ Despite its familiar meaning, moreover, *in somnis* has special significance in the first line of Propertius's poem.

The phrase *in somnis* is used with epiphany/message dreams, dreams in which the dreamer is a participant, and symbolic dreams. R. G. Austin's list of occurrences of the phrase in Vergil and elsewhere in Latin literature offers diverse examples.³⁰ Considering its precedents in Latin literature, Propertius's use of *somnus* in the plural to refer to the circumstance of a dream is unremarkable; rather, it is the combination of the phrase with the verb *vidi* that lends it meaning that is particular to this poet. The prepositional phrase *in somnis* not only refers to the type of sleep in which dreams occur but, used in combination with *vidi*, refers to the actual moment of viewing as distinct from the moment in which the dream is recounted. The poet's use of *in somnis* in 2.26a immediately establishes the location of this viewing experience as removed from the present context in which the dreamer relates his dream. In lieu of a description of the context for his dream, "vidi in somnis" succinctly collapses reference to both the state in which his vision occurred and the context for Cynthia's action in the dream. The past tense of the verb and the ablative phrase anticipate a description that is both temporally and perceptually distant from the present circumstances of the narration.

The phrase *in somnis* is most frequently used by other Roman poets with a verb that indicates a visitation, either a passive form of *videre* indicating "appearance," or a verb that indicates the arrival of a ghost.³¹ In Propertius 2.26a, by contrast, the unusual use of the active *vidi* places emphasis upon the dreamer's internal vision rather than upon the external appearance of a dream image. A statement by Lucretius provides a useful parallel for the use of an active verb in conjunction with *in somnis*. Introducing his discussion of the *rerum simulacra*

(“images of things”) at the opening of book 4 of *De Rerum Natura*, Lucretius defines these *simulacra* as images that terrify men both when they are awake and as they sleep (lines 31–37):

quae, quasi membranae summo de corpore rerum
dereptae, volitant ultroque citroque per auras,
atque eadem nobis vigilantibus obvia mentis
terrificant atque in somnis, cum saepe figuras
contuimur miras simulacraque luce carentum 35
quae nos horrifice languentis saepe sopore
excierunt . . .

[These images are like films stripped from the outermost body of things, which fly back and forth through the breezes, and these same images terrify our minds when they strike us, both when we are awake and in sleep, when we often gaze on wondrous forms and images of the light-deprived dead, images that have often stirred us awake with horror as we lay languid in sleep . . .]

The phrase *in somnis* here refers to sleep, appearing in balanced opposition to *vigilantibus* (“while awake”), but the *cum* clause that follows it defines it as a period in which dreams occur, corresponding to *obvia mentis* in line 33. The *cum* clause in lines 34–35 characterizes dreaming as the experience of seeing amazing things in sleep that cannot possibly be real, but are experienced as similar enough to waking vision that they have an equal power to terrify the dreamer out of his sleep, as lines 36–37 indicate. The verb *contuimur* in line 35 suggests the power of dream images to terrify the dreamer through reference to the dreamer’s (seemingly) active perception of these images.

Keeping the precedent of Lucretius in mind, I would like to suggest that when combined with *in somnis*, the active verb *vidi* in Propertius 2.26a points out the paradox inherent in dreams: namely, that they seem real to the dreamer as they are happening but can be immediately contrasted with actual vision upon waking. Propertius is able to communicate the indelibility of his own dream experience by juxtaposing his acknowledgment of the dream (*in somnis*) with a reference to vision (*vidi*). The poet relates his vision with the confidence of a viewer, but his recourse to analogies that both transform Cynthia and refer to acts of metamorphosis as he describes the dream reveal his uncertainty about what he has actually seen.

In Propertius’s other dream poems, 3.3 and 4.7, the narrator reports seeing a figure who is reclining (“visus eram . . . recubans . . . hiscere posse,” 3.3.1–4) or hovering (“Cynthia . . . visa est incumbere,” 4.7.1); in both cases the figure is

immobile and is introduced with a form of *videre* in the passive combined with a complementary infinitive. By contrast, the active *vidi* of 2.26a.1 suggests not so much an epiphany, but rather the viewing of a dynamic scene that befits the constantly shifting flow of the water that provides its setting. The combination of *vidi* and *te* in the poem's opening line would have signaled the syntax of an indirect statement, although the reader had to wait until line 2 to recognize the pronoun *te* as the accusative subject of the infinitive *ducere*. The initial juxtaposition of *vidi* and *te* also emphasizes the visual dynamics that will dominate in this poem: Cynthia will be the object of the dreamer's vision, as her actions are contained in an indirect statement. Furthermore, the poet sees an image of Cynthia in motion ("ducere rore manus"), which contrasts with the static images of recumbent or hovering figures in 3.3 and 4.7.

I would like to suggest an additional implication of the poet's opening words. In contrast to his other dream poems, Propertius is here narrating the vision specifically to Cynthia, as is indicated by the pronoun *te*. The use of *te* creates a Cynthia who is listening to his narration, evoking the intimate scene of a revelation of dreams between lovers in the morning after a night together. These dynamics are familiar from poem 1.9, where the combination of a first-person verb (*dicebam*) and a pronoun (*tibi*) introducing an indirect statement recalled an interrupted discussion between friends. Thus the use of *te*, by implying the presence of a potential interpreter or commentator on the dream, communicates a sense of urgency in its retelling. The standard qualifier *in somnis* to introduce the dream takes on new meaning when we consider the context of this particular narration. By using this phrase, the poet also makes a distinction between what he sees before him as he narrates the dream, the "real" Cynthia, and what he witnessed in the dream, her dislocated and unfamiliar dream persona.

Cynthia's Metamorphoses

Metamorphosis plays a complex role in poem 2.26a. The dream itself transforms Cynthia by alienating her from her familiar urban context and placing her in the expanse of the sea. There she is described in terms that both recall and transform her appearance as established earlier in book 2.³² At the level of narrative, three descriptive passages contain mythological exempla that suggest additional transformations. By using these exempla to describe Cynthia's appearance in the dream, the poet further defamiliarizes his lover. Moreover, these mythological exempla contain stories of victims of metamorphosis, and thus their presence spurs contemplation of other types of transformation in the dream. Finally, the poet's dream description constitutes his own metamorphic act, as he

transforms the images of his dream into a textual narrative that includes similes, exempla, and retrospective commentary in order to enable the reader to envision the nightmare the poet himself has witnessed.

Propertius's dream of his lover is set in a seascape, with the sea and a rocky crag the sole topographical markers. Not only does the sea provide the context for the action of the dream, but its waters are themselves an agent of the dream's events. The sea is an appropriate vessel for transformation because it is home to a number of hybrid or transformed creatures.³³ Four of these appear in poem 2.26a: Leucothoë, Glaucus, the Nereids Nesae and Cymothoë, and the dolphin.³⁴ Although the poet does not provide a perspective that conveys the sea's wide expanse, he includes a variety of terms to describe its water: *rore* (line 2), *umore* (line 4), *purpureis fluctibus* (line 5), *gurgite* (line 11). In particular, he emphasizes the water's close contact with Cynthia's body, as the juxtaposition of the nouns *rore* and *manus* (line 2) and *gurgite* and *palmas* (line 11) demonstrates.

As Propertius describes Cynthia in the process of drowning, he isolates individual parts of her body as she struggles to stay afloat. References to her arms in motion ("Ionio lassas ducere rore manus," line 2), her weighed-down hair ("nec iam umore gravis tollere posse comas," line 4), and the desperate extension of her palms ("vix primas extollens gurgite palmas," line 11) create an impression of chaos and lack of control, while they also suggest Cynthia's progressive sinking beneath the waves. Furthermore, these references serve to dismember her by isolating individual body parts, rather than suggesting an integral human form. Engulfing and nearly drowning her in a gradual fashion, the waters reveal mere glimpses of her as she fights to keep some part of herself recognizable above the surface. Propertius draws attention to the physical effects of Cynthia's drowning and links them by placing the nouns *manus* (line 2), *comas* (line 4), and *palmas* (line 11) at the ends of their respective lines.

Cynthia's battle to stay afloat, although described mostly in terms of her physical struggle, is punctuated by reference to her confession of previous lies: "et quaecumque in me fueras mentita fateri" ("[I saw] you confessing whatever lies you had told me," line 3). This reference to her speech occurs between two descriptions of her physical appearance. Like the references to her physical struggle to stay afloat in lines 2 and 4, which present her in a distorted and unfamiliar light, her desperate confession strikes the reader as uncharacteristic.³⁵ This part of the dream mingles wish fulfillment with punitive fantasy.³⁶ As Holt Parker observes, the poet's use of the indicative *fueras* (as opposed to *fueris*, an alternative reading) refers to her lying as a fact, an occurrence located in reality outside the poem.³⁷ This "parenthetical statement," as Parker calls it, contrasts with the surrounding references to Cynthia's appearance, both because it refers to her words (as opposed

to her looks) and because, by referring to the circumstances of their relationship outside the dream and addressing her directly, it opposes dream and reality. This alternation between dream image and reminder of waking reality is then disrupted by a second type of deviation from the narration of the dream.

The emphasis upon Cynthia's physical attributes, such as her hands and hair in lines 2 and 4, is nothing new for Propertius, as Flaschenriem observes; it is the way in which these features of the lover are displayed in this poem that contributes to their connection with metamorphosis.³⁸ The lover's hair, hands, fingers, and eyes, the very attributes singled out in poem 2.26a, are frequently praised in elegiac poetry. Propertius uses a variety of words to describe these parts: *capilli* and *coma* for hair, *manus* and *digitus* for hands and fingers, *oculi*, *ocelli*, or *lumina* for eyes. But Cynthia's hands and hair, specifically designated by the words *manus* and *coma*, the objects of the dreamer's sight in lines 2 and 4 of poem 2.26a, had appeared together twice, once each in poems 2.1 and 2.2, the programmatic poems of book 2. If we read the images of poem 2.26a with these earlier images in mind, we see a striking contrast that suggests a type of metamorphosis from the established Cynthia to the one envisioned in the dream.

In poem 2.1 the poet declares the new source of inspiration for his poetry. Claiming that neither Apollo nor Calliope inspires him, he reveals that his *puella* is his new muse: "non haec Calliope, non haec mihi cantat Apollo. / ingenium nobis ipsa puella facit" ("It is not Calliope, not Apollo that inspires these songs in me. My girl herself creates the inspiration," lines 3–4). This bold statement is the prelude to his *recusatio* of epic poetry.³⁹ The poet claims to derive his inspiration in particular from his observation of Cynthia's physical appearance (lines 5–12). The individual parts of her body elicit the poet's praise through his subsequent translation into a poem of his impression of what he has seen. The nouns *comis* (line 8) and *manus* (line 10) appear at the ends of the two central couplets (lines 7–10), which reveal Propertius's inspiration from watching his lover. In lines 7–8, the first line of the couplet states an observation of Cynthia's physical appearance, and the second reveals the translation of his observation into his poetry: "seu vidi ad frontem sparsos errare capillos, / gaudet laudatis ire superba comis" ("if I have seen scattered locks of hair wandering on her brow, she takes delight in walking proudly with praised hair"). Describing his reaction to Cynthia's lyre playing in lines 9–10, the poet moves from observation of her nimble fingers in action to amazement at the skill of her hands: "sive lyrae carmen digitis percussit eburnis, / miramur, facilis ut premat arte manus" ("if with ivory fingers she strikes a song on the lyre, I marvel how skillfully she applies her easy hand").

The nouns are reunited in poem 2.2, in which Cynthia's beauty is compared to that of a goddess: "fulva coma est longaeque manus, et maxima toto / corpore,

et incedit vel Iove digna soror / aut cum Dulichias Pallas spatatur ad aras" ("She has tawny hair and slender hands; her tall figure is impressive, and she walks as a sister worthy even of Jove; or like Pallas as she strides to Athenian altars," lines 5–7). The color of her hair and length of her hands characterize Cynthia's beauty; these features combined with her stature make her worthy of comparison to the goddesses Juno and Minerva as they are observed from afar in movement. The end of this short poem demonstrates the poet's awareness of the eventual erosion of Cynthia's physical beauty (here represented by the noun *faciem*) by old age and utters a wish against this outcome: "hanc utinam faciem nolit mutare senectus, / etsi Cumaeae saecula vatis agat!" ("May old age refuse to change this beauty, although she may live the centuries of the Cumaean Sibyl!" lines 15–16). With these lines, the poet implies a connection between youth and desirability.

The nouns *coma* and *manus* do not appear together again until poem 2.26a, where the poet offers a glimpse at Cynthia's beauty transformed by a condition other than age. In this poem he imagines her physical features obscured by the sea rather than physically decaying. In the context of the nightmare, her hands are not engaged in refined activities; rather, they are connected to her attempt at self-preservation. Her hair, rather than appearing delicately strewn across her forehead as in poem 2.1, is weighed down, pulling her below the waves. This is not an appearance that will cause her to stroll about feeling proud (cf. *superba* in 2.1.8); if anything, the adjective *gravis* connotes the opposite of the image of Cynthia's loftiness in poem 2.1. Nevertheless, by singling out these markers of female physical beauty in poem 2.26a, the poet eroticizes her vulnerability as she drowns.

As she is envisioned in the nightmare, Cynthia experiences a type of metamorphosis mid-sea. Appearing as a series of disconnected body parts, individually visible to the dreamer as she fights to keep from sinking further under the waves, she is presented in glimpses, rather than as an integral entity. Furthermore, when her hands and hair are translated into this poem and brought into the context of a dream, they inspire in the poet a new kind of creativity. Rather than compose new works of poetry when he sees her (as in poem 2.1), however, he invents a simile, which in turn evokes the worlds of epic poetry and visual art for the reader. The poet's use of simile creates an additional metamorphosis.⁴⁰

Simile of Helle

The narrator's focus on the corporeal aspects of Cynthia's drowning ensures that the reader is unable to avert his or her eyes from it. Instead, what distracts the reader from the immediacy of Cynthia's misfortune and the urgency of her actions is the poet's creation of an alternative realm consisting of

mythological analogies for aspects of her predicament, in the form of vibrant, visually evocative commentaries on the images from his dream. While these references to mythology are meant to enhance comprehension, they instead multiply the possibilities for interpretation of the scene.

The first of two striking departures from the poet's narration of his dream occurs in lines 5 and 6, where the narrator compares Cynthia to Helle in her vain struggle to stay afloat after slipping off the back of the ram and into the strait: "qualem purpureis agitatam fluctibus Hellen, / aurea quam molli tergo vexit ovis" ("just like Helle tossed about on the purple waves, whom the golden ram transported on its soft back"). With these lines Propertius chooses a mythological reference with limited narrative content and a minimal presence in literature to comment on Cynthia's life-threatening predicament. As Christine Walde notes, Helle provides only a partial analogy for Cynthia, who is merely in the process of drowning and does not actually die.⁴¹ But the specter of Helle's death looms over the next couplet as well, in which the poet imagines the consequences of Cynthia's drowning in terms of Helle's fate. In lines 7 and 8, he expresses his fear of her death in terms of the renaming of the sea after her and the mourning of the sailors who would journey through her waters after her death: "quam timui, ne forte tuum mare nomen haberet, / teque tua labens navita fleret aqua"⁴² ("How I feared that the sea would by chance have your name, and that a sailor sailing through your waters would weep for you"). The aftermath of Helle's drowning, her eternal association with the strait named after her, alluded to in lines 7–8, is not contained within the simile. Rather, the focus of the simile is an instant in the story, conveyed in a vivid image of Helle, having slipped from the ram's back, being consumed by the rough sea, which prompts the poet to overlay the two stories as he returns his focus to Cynthia.

This has significant implications for a reading of the poem as a metaphor for Propertius's poetic program. If, as critics like Maria Wyke have argued,⁴³ Cynthia represents the personification of Propertius's poetic material, regardless of her status as an acquaintance of the poet himself, then her name is her enduring legacy in the corpus of poems. Just as Helle imbued the strait connecting the Aegean and the Sea of Marmara, transforming this passageway into *her* water, the Hellespont, Cynthia might rename the Ionian Sea with her own name, gaining immortality as a result of losing her life. As Flaschenriem reminds us, the Ionian Sea was itself given the name of a girl, Io, who plunged herself into its waters for safety,⁴⁴ so this is a body of water primed to assume the identity of the girl who touches its waves.

The analogy with Helle is contained in lines 5 and 6, but its effect lasts through line 10. Let us look at some of the intervening lines in detail. We have seen how in lines 7 and 8, the poet reveals the fear inspired by his powerful belief in the image

he has created in his simile. In lines 9 and 10, he takes action by praying to various sea gods, presumably to intercede for Cynthia's safety: "quae tum ego Neptuno, quae tum cum Castore fratri, / quaeque tibi excepi, iam dea, Leucothoe!" ("What vows did I then make to Neptune, to Castor and his brother, and to you, Leucothoë, now a goddess!"). Lines 5 and 10, the boundaries of the simile and its implications, are balanced by the names "Helle" and "Leucothoë" at the end of each line. While Helle is invoked explicitly as an analogy for Cynthia, reference to Leucothoë serves a different function in the poem. She is invoked as a savior whose intervention might prevent Cynthia from suffering Helle's fate, but there are additional connections. By means of her transformation into Leucothoë, Ino not only changed her name but became immortal as a sea goddess. As Flaschenriem points out, Ino/Leucothoë is an apt parallel for Cynthia because Cynthia may achieve a type of "immortality" through Propertius's poetry.⁴⁵

Their similar placement in their respective lines reveals a second connection between Leucothoë and Helle. The poet's implied association between the two female characters suggests that Helle's fate after drowning can be read not simply as a death, but rather as a type of transformation via commemoration. Metamorphosis, as Ovid makes clear in his *Metamorphoses*, extends life by allowing transformation into new forms. The pronoun *te* juxtaposed with the phrase *tua aqua* in line 8 indicates that Cynthia will not only give her name to the sea, as Helle did, but will actually become the sea named after her. This echoes the visual pun in line 7, in which *mare*, the subject of the verb *haberet*, is surrounded by the words *tuum* and *nomen*, the verb's object. To the extent that Cynthia or Helle (or Io, for that matter, evoked by *Ionio rore* in line 2) gives her name to the sea, she will also be transformed into that body of water; by becoming associated with the sea, she will become inextricable from it.⁴⁶ The imagined sailor who crosses the strait is acutely aware of the presence of the girl who drowned there because she imbues the waters in her new guise. The slight difference between giving one's name to the sea in death and becoming a sea goddess after dying at sea is suggested by the poet's next mythological reference.

Other Metamorphoses: Glaucus and the Nereids

After calling by name the divinities of the sea known to help sailors in distress (Neptune, the Dioscuri, and Leucothoë, lines 9–10), Propertius returns to the narrative of his dream with a description of Cynthia drowning and calling out in what could be her final moment before death (lines 11–12). As though inspired by reference to Ino's transformation into Leucothoë via the appositive phrase *iam dea* (line 10), the poet imagines Cynthia's transformation into a sea

creature (*puella maris*) rather than her immersion in the sea, as the future participle *peritura* in line 12 had suggested was imminent.

The description of Glaucus and the Nereids in lines 13–16 falls in the middle of one of the narrator’s remarks upon what he sees in his dream, and is thus another rupture in the diachronic progress of 2.26a:

quod si forte tuos vidisset Glaucus ocellos,
 esses Ionii facta puella maris
 et tibi ob invidiam Nereides increpitarent,
 candida Nesaeae, caerulea Cymothoe.

[If Glaucus had by chance seen your eyes, you would have become a girl of
 the Ionian Sea, and the Nereids would be reproaching you out of jealousy,
 white Nesaeae and cerulean Cymothoe.]

Here the narrator imagines that if Glaucus—a character not usually associated with the story of Helle and Phrixus—were to witness Cynthia during her metamorphosis into the sea itself, his desire would ensure that she complete the transformation by making her into a sea creature (“Ionii . . . puella maris,” line 14).⁴⁷ In the subsequent lines, the narrator imagines that Glaucus’s desire for Cynthia will provoke the jealousy of the Nereids, who appear in the next couplet (lines 15–16).

But Glaucus’s lust is described in terms that have specific relevance for the poem’s visual penchant. Propertius writes that Glaucus would have wanted to possess Cynthia if he had seen her eyes (“quod si forte tuos vidisset Glaucus ocellos,” line 13). This image not only reminds the reader of the poem’s preoccupation with sight, but also alludes to the first line of poem 1.1, in which the narrator claims that Cynthia first captured him with these very eyes (“Cynthia prima suis miserum me cepit ocellis”). In poem 2.26a Cynthia’s eyes are the last features seen by the witness to her drowning. We imagine that Cynthia has sunk so far below the water that her eyes are no longer visible; if she had stayed afloat, she would have maintained visual authority and made Glaucus suffer in love as the narrator of Propertius’s poems had. Glaucus, through his brief appearance in the poem, becomes a foil for the narrator himself, a modification of the narrator’s role as viewer in the nightmare. Glaucus is the subject of the verb *vidisset*, which, although subjunctive and part of a contrafactual condition, provides a parallel to the narrator’s action in *vidi* (lines 1 and 17). By contrast with the narrator, Glaucus is close enough to Cynthia to be able to see her eyes; his proximity to her, coupled with the notorious power of Cynthia’s eyes, would have been sufficient to enflame his desire and make him want to preserve her life.

Glaucus mirrors the poet's action in another significant way: having the ability to transform Cynthia into a "girl of the Ionian sea" ("Ionii . . . puella maris," line 14). As Flaschnriem observes, by stating the possible outcome of an encounter between Cynthia and Glaucus, the poet "invites us to picture his beloved, now transformed into a Nereid (*puella maris*, 14)."⁴⁸ Glaucus's skill at performing metamorphosis echoes the poet's ability to "transform" Cynthia into Helle through his use of simile. But there is a degree of irony in Glaucus's projected ability. The best-known version of Glaucus's story is related in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.⁴⁹ In 13.898–965, Ovid tells of Glaucus's initial transformation into a sea god, with human-piscine form. Glaucus is himself a victim of metamorphosis: born a mortal fisherman, he is transformed into a sea creature after consuming a magical herb. The story culminates with his unsuccessful seduction of Scylla, who runs from him when she notices his hybrid form. Scylla not only rejects Glaucus, but flees to the topmost point of a crag, thus emphasizing her disgust by the distance she covers in her escape.

In Propertius's poem, by contrast, Glaucus is imagined to have the power to transform the girl he loves, forcing her to join him in his habitat. It is not possible to determine what, if any, source Propertius knew for Glaucus's story, but if he was drawing upon a story in which Glaucus's transformation was linked to his rejection by a potential lover who flees to an extreme location rather than join him, then the poet's alternative presentation of Glaucus in the context of his dream is significant. Propertius's Glaucus can perform metamorphoses rather than suffer as a result of his own. By altering Glaucus's story, Propertius draws attention to the way he manipulates myth to convey his own perspective. Thus the poet's reinvention of Glaucus is particularly relevant in the context of a dream in which distorted perspectives on the familiar abound.

Arion's Dolphin

The reader realizes the physical marginality of the narrator in the final four lines of poem 2.26a, where the narrator reveals his own location in the dreamscape: "iamque ego conabar summo me mittere saxo," line 19. The poet has observed Cynthia drowning while he is perched on a rock on land at a distance from his suffering lover. His position in the context of the dream is not unlike that of a dreamer in his sleep: he is at once present at and detached from the dream's events, while he is entirely isolated from the waking world around him. The poet's characterization as peripheral to the action of the dream is also conveyed by the imperfect verb *conabar* ("I was trying to"), which implies his potential but incomplete movement.

It is from the vantage point of the *summo saxo* of line 19 that he has seen a dolphin swimming to Cynthia's rescue: "sed tibi subsidio delphinum currere vidi," line 17. Use of the first-person *vidi* recalls the opening word of the poem, where the visual perspective of the dreamer is established. Line 17 finally reveals the vantage point from which the looking occurs. The narrator surmises that this is the same creature who bore Arion ("qui, puto, Arioniam vexerat ante lyram," line 18), the poet who, according to Herodotus, invented the dithyramb.⁵⁰ The narrator indicates his assumption about the dolphin's identity with the parenthetical *puto* inserted into a relative clause. Thus the dreamer's identification of the dolphin as Arion's is twice subordinated (via the relative clause and the parenthetical *puto*) to the dreamer's observation of him in the nightmare. This usage of *puto* is unusual for Propertius; in fact, it provides the sole example of his use of this verb in a parenthetical statement, and is one of only two examples of the use of this verb in the first person singular in the entire corpus.⁵¹ The narrator's statement of opinion here provides a variation upon his other modes of commentary on the dream: the Helle simile and the Glaucus hypothesis. But instead of giving emphasis to his claim, the parenthetical *puto* characterizes the identification of the dolphin ("qui . . . Arioniam vexerat ante lyram") as an afterthought to the dreamer's observation of the dolphin itself (*delphinum*, line 17).

As Herodotus tells the story, the poet Arion was rescued by a dolphin after the crew of his ship threatened to kill him and steal his money, forcing him to jump overboard. Arion's story attests to the power of poetry to please and entrance, as it was the poet's skill at playing the lyre that persuaded his captors to let him live and thus give him time to summon the dolphin to his aid.⁵² Given the number of references to mythology in poem 2.26a, it is no surprise that Propertius uses the familiar tale of last-minute rescue to convey the salvation of Cynthia in his dream. But the relevance of the comparison is less clear. Critics of the poem have seen a conflation of Cynthia with the poet's poetry in this analogy: Flaschenriem, for example, makes the point that Cynthia is here equated not just with the poet Arion, but specifically with his lyre (*Arioniam lyram*), the means for creating poetry. Thus Cynthia in the role of Arion can be seen as an analogue both for Propertius's poetry itself and for the poet's ability to create poetry.

I believe that the role of the dolphin rescue within the context of the dream is as important to consider as the connection to Arion. The story of Arion's magical rescue makes a clear distinction between the sea and the shore as places of danger and safety, respectively. It is his journey to shore on the dolphin's back that allows Arion to live and also to accuse his captors when they return to shore. The implication of the dolphin's rescue of Cynthia is that she will be brought to safety, just as Arion was. Implicit in his mention is the suggestion not only that Cynthia will be

saved from death at sea, but that she will be brought to shore, thereby closing the distance between the lovers in the dream, and specifically disrupting the poet's perspective as a distant voyeur. As he foresees the erasure of the distance between himself and his lover, the dreamer is moved to close that gap himself by leaping into the water. Instead, the dreamer's gesture toward closing the gap brings about the abrupt end of the dream, thereby effecting a simultaneous end to spectatorship both within the dream and in his retrospective glance.

The Visual Style of 2.26a

Poem 2.26a is striking for its pairing of direct narration of the images of a dream and evocative commentary upon these images, such as we have seen with the juxtaposition of the initial image of Cynthia in lines 1 through 4 and the simile of lines 5 and 6. With this technique, the poet layers imagery from two distinct worlds—that of dream and that of myth—leaving the reader to make connections between these worlds and to contemplate the relationship of each world to elements of the dreamer's waking reality. This incongruity between the content of the dream—the drowning and desperation of Cynthia—and the intrusion of myth into the poet's narration makes it difficult to establish the poet's emotional stance within the poem. The mythological passages allow him to create a buffer between himself and the frightening content of the nightmare, and the resulting distance affords him a retrospective detachment that the dreamer is unable to experience while dreaming. The poet's apparent ability to reduce the frightening image of Cynthia drowning to a scene of seduction by the sea creature Glaucus, which in turn inspires petty jealousy among the Nereids (lines 15–16), for example, has led more than one critic to draw attention to the jarring use of humor in the poem.⁵³

More than the elements of bathos that characterize the poet's seemingly callous attitude toward his lover in this poem, however, commentators have noticed that his descriptions have a pictorial quality that evokes images represented in visual art. This quality brings a third sphere of reference into the world of the poem. Thus the poem's description of Cynthia via the Helle simile is effective not only because it recalls the traditional story of Helle's plight, but also because it evokes visual representations of her fate. As with the hints of humor in the poem, some critics have seen a similar emotional detachment behind this feature. Most recently, Flaschenriem has commented on Cynthia's dual role as visual object and focus of the poet's concern within the poem, suggesting a split between his immediate reaction to what he sees and his studied description of it.⁵⁴

In his foundational study on the role of the visual arts in Propertius's elegies, Karl Keyssner identified the influence of contemporary Roman wall painting on the image of Helle drowning, which enabled the poet to interweave his fantasies with a paradigm taken from painting in a type of "lattice work."⁵⁵ Keyssner's observation on the dream poem—one example among many he cites to demonstrate the influence of contemporary painting on Propertius—is notable for its acknowledgment of the dream context for the poet's particular mingling of mythological reference and visual art. More typical is the observation of commentator W. A. Camps, who suggested hesitantly, in parentheses, in his commentary on line 5: "(It may be that Propertius has here in mind a painting of this famous scene from mythology)."⁵⁶ Although other critics have been bolder in making connections between the Helle simile and images from visual art, as we shall see below, there has been very little discussion either of the visual qualities of the poet's language (other than the reference to a mythological character known to have been represented in visual art) or of the particular relevance of visual imagery in the context of a dream description. Not only are the poem's mythological subjects—Helle and the ram, the Nereids, and the dolphin—familiar from extant Roman wall painting, as Camps's comment seems to suggest about Helle, but, as I shall demonstrate, the poet's mode for describing these subjects privileges the stylistic qualities specific to paintings. Furthermore, when these qualities are evoked in a dream description, they play a role that is particular to this context. In the following section I suggest a connection between the poet's use of pictorial imagery in his poem and his desire to convey to his reader the visual experience of his dream.

Color Imagery

Margaret Hubbard gave specific examples of the pictorial quality of poem 2.26a, observing that "Propertius is quite conscious of deriving his scene from a picture and therefore offers the simile in the third couplet, underlining its pictorial character by the colour contrast between the purple waves and the golden fleece; the later contrast between *candida Nesae* and *caerula Cymothoe* makes the same point."⁵⁷ Nancy Wiggers echoed Hubbard and added her own observation on the image's texture when she cited the poet's "almost painterly pleasure in the contrast between the colors of the sea (*purpureis fluctibus*) and the fleece (*aurea ovis*) and between the textures of the water (the turbulence of which is implied in *agitata*) and the soft wool (*molli tergo*), which is inappropriate to the danger being described."⁵⁸ Both authors are interested in the link between the poet's painterly approach in the mythological passages and the perception of his

increased emotional distance from the terrifying scene he claimed to have seen firsthand, a sentiment that is captured by Wiggers's labeling of the description as "inappropriate."⁵⁹

The variegated colors of the two Nereids in the balanced structure of line 16, especially when considered in conjunction with the earlier color pairing of lines 5 and 6, clearly suggest their depiction in a painting or mosaic. The Nereids were popular subjects for depiction in various visual media from Greece and Rome.⁶⁰ They often appear in groups and are shown riding on the backs of sea creatures in the company of other sea divinities or attending the sea journey of a recognizable figure such as Amphitrite or Europa. We have already seen Roman examples of the depiction of Nereids in figures 5 and 6. Color plays an important role in the Boscotrecase painting (fig. 6), as the Nereid Galatea is offset from her blue-green marine context by her yellow-golden garments and white skin.⁶¹ This contrast is indicative, as von Blanckenhagen notes, of the "strange combination of opposites" that characterizes the multiple viewpoints and many colors of the painting.⁶² These critics also note the similarity between the Boscotrecase painting and the description of Galatea in Theocritus's *Idyll* 11, where the poet specifically identifies by color "white" Galatea (Ἦ λευκὰ Γαλάτεια. . . λευκοτέρα πακτᾶς ποτιδεῖν, lines 19–20), an epithet appropriate for the etymology of her name, and the "blue-green" or "gray-green" sea (τὰν γλαυκὰν δὲ θάλασσαν, line 43) that contains and separates her from the dark Polyphemus.⁶³

The mention of color in association with the Nereids is common, so by selecting color epithets for the Nereids in his poem, Propertius is certainly not using innovative diction. In fact, he uses the adjective *caerulea* to describe the Nereid Thetis in elegy 2.9.15.⁶⁴ Elsewhere in Latin literature, the Nereids are described with adjectives referring to their green hue, such as *viridis*.⁶⁵ The association of the colors green and blue with the Nereids is an obvious choice, since they reflect the hues of the sea, while the adjective *candida* when applied to the marine environment could describe the crests of waves, or the white caps of a choppy sea.⁶⁶ Thus the poet's use of this color combination may have been meant to evoke the contrasting colors of a wave disturbed as a sea creature rises from the ocean's depth.

In addition to their obvious visual appeal, mention of the colorful Nereids might incite the reader to recall Catullus 64, which opens with an image of the Nereids marveling at the Argo as it makes its passage through the sea en route to the wedding of the Argonaut Peleus to the Nereid Thetis, in a scene that itself brings to mind several literary precedents.⁶⁷ Catullus describes the sea cleaved by the Argo as *caerulea aequora* in line 7. Just two lines before this, he had mentioned the Argonauts' quest to obtain the golden fleece at Colchis using the phrase *auratam . . . pellem* (these words appear at the beginning and end of line 5), which

Propertius recalls with his pairing of *aurea* and *ovis* in the same line positions at 2.26a.6. The blue-green color of the sea changes to white as it is churned by the oars of the ship and creates foam, a scene Catullus describes as “*tortaque remigio spumis incanuit unda*” in line 13.⁶⁸ The alternation between the blue-green sea and its white foam in Catullus’s poem coincides with the appearance of the Nereids, who are said to rise up from the water at this point to admire the ship. As Basil Dufallo points out, the gaze of the Nereids at the Argo (line 15, “*Nereides admirantes*”) is reciprocated by that of the Argonauts, for whom the Nereids, described as “*nutricum tenus exstantes e gurgite cano*” (“nude up to their breasts emerging from a white whirlpool,” line 18), “become objects of an erotic gaze: that of the narrator but also of the Argonauts and potentially of the visualizing audience.”⁶⁹ The prepositional phrase “*e gurgite cano*” again signals the contrast between the blue-green color of the ocean at rest and the white caused by its disturbance.⁷⁰ This introductory section of Catullus 64 establishes what will turn out to be a pervasive fascination with looking in the poem, and the pronounced references to the colors of the ocean in which the initial visual exchanges between the Nereids and the Argonauts occur enhance the visibility of this scene for the poem’s reader. Thus in using *caerula* and *candida* in combination to describe the appearance of the Nereids in poem 2.26a, Propertius summons Catullus’s literary precedent of combining these color terms in his description of a similar context in which the Nereids are both viewers and objects of viewing in order to position his own Nereids as objects of viewing within the dream.

With this intertext in mind, I suggest that Propertius’s use of the contrasting colors *candida* and *caerula* to describe individual Nereids in the apposition of line 16 is a stylistic flourish that casts the Nereids as visual objects. Specifically, the poet’s emphasis on color shifts attention away from the Nereids’ active role in the narrative (as indicated by the verb *inreptarent* in line 15). It is this shift that suggests their similarity to a painted representation. The same could be said for the pairing of *purpureis* and *aurea* in lines 5 and 6: the attention to the detail of contrasting colors shifts the reader’s focus from the violence of Helle slipping into the water from the ram to visual appreciation of the water and the ram as aesthetic objects juxtaposed for visual appeal.

We might consider Propertius’s use of color in poem 2.26a in conjunction with a couplet from poem 1.2, where he refers to the work of the renowned Greek painter Apelles. Within the context of the poem, the color of Apelles’s paintings is equated with the natural beauty of various women from mythology, whose ability to seduce their lovers unaided by jewels is praised by the poet. Earlier in the poem, he contrasts Cynthia’s false adornment with that of women from literature and myth who, he claims, did not need the help of ornament (*cultu*, line 16) or false

radiance (*falso candore*, line 19) to entice their lovers. Propertius ends his complaint about Cynthia's reliance upon artificial means by comparing the natural, unadorned appearance (*facies*, line 21) of these women to the color used by Apelles: "sed facies aderat nullis obnoxia gemmis, / qualis Apelleis est color in tabulis" ("but their appearance, just like the color on Apelles's paintings, was not dependent on any jewels," lines 21–22). Presumably Propertius refers here to Apelles's simple and unadorned style, which Pliny the Elder mentions in his *Natural History*.⁷¹ But there is also an implication that Apelles's paintings were somehow closer to nature, like the flowers (*colores*) that grow naturally from untilled earth (line 9), or the natural pebbles (*nativis lapillis*) that are said to "paint" the shore (*litora picta*) in line 13. This statement is paradoxical in the context of the disparagement of artifice that characterizes the poem, as it suggests that something man-made, a painting, is comparable to something unadorned by false elements, natural female beauty. In addition to referring to the simplicity of Apelles's color palette, Propertius may allude indirectly to the function of color in painting as a means for creating an illusion of what is natural.

Let us turn briefly to an analogy between a painter's use of color and a poet's literary technique. In the section of his *Moralia* devoted to giving advice to young men on the study of poetry, the early-imperial Greek writer Plutarch suggests that color in painting creates for the viewer the illusion of being lifelike, just as falsehood in poetry conveyed in plausible fashion is more attractive to the reader than simple narration of the truth: ἀλλ' ὥσπερ ἐν γραφαῖς κινητικώτερον ἐστὶ χρῶμα γραμμῆς διὰ τὸ ἀνδρεῖκελον καὶ ἀπατηλόν, οὕτως ἐν ποιήμασι μεμιγμένον πιθανότητι ψεῦδος ἐκπλήττει καὶ ἀγαπᾶται μᾶλλον τῆς ἀμύθου καὶ ἀπλάστου περὶ μέτρον καὶ λέξιν κατασκευῆς ("But, just as in pictures, color is more stimulating than line-drawing because it is more life-like and illusionistic, so in poetry falsehood combined with plausibility is more striking and gives more satisfaction, than the work which is elaborate in meter and diction, but devoid of myth and fiction," *Moralia*, 1.16b–c).⁷² Plutarch's statement makes clear what is implicit in Propertius's remark about Apelles: color in painting (χρῶμα) appealed to the viewer more than line drawing (γραμμῆς) because it was both lifelike (ἀνδρεῖκελον) and deceptive (ἀπατηλόν)—that is, it created the illusion of reality. By using color so prominently in his short dream poem, Propertius blatantly evokes painted depiction, but perhaps he also hints at the illusionistic quality of painting. In doing this, the poet would underscore the suitability of painted images for conveying the images of his dream, for dreams have a lifelike quality for the dreamer so long as he remains asleep, just as color paintings appeal to their viewers with their lifelike appearance. In retrospective dream narration, the paradigm of the lifelike painting is an apt analogue for capturing the experience of the dream while it is occurring

for the dreamer and thus suggesting the indelibility of this experience for the reader.

Composition

Beyond establishing the pictorial quality of the color imagery in poem 2.26a, there is more to say about the function of pictorial images there. Hubbard's analysis of the poem in the epilogue to her book on Propertius offers the most detailed critique of its visual qualities, and her work is a good place to start our discussion about the larger relevance of identifying the poem's pictorial quality. Hubbard observes a key feature of Propertius's visual style: its affinity for the static quality of painting or sculpture, rather than the "cinematic" scope, with its emphasis on movement, that she associates with the work of Vergil. She sees this as connected to Propertius's penchant for describing his visual experience in terms of a represented ideal rather than in realistic terms, citing the mythological analogies that open poem 1.3, an important predecessor for 2.26a, as a prime example of this tendency.⁷³

One of Hubbard's major contributions to our understanding of poem 2.26a is her suggestion that its images and the order in which they appear reflect not just the themes or the techniques, but also the compositions, of works of visual art known to Propertius. Citing as models the composition of a mosaic from the Villa San Marco in Stabiae, now in the Naples Archaeological Museum (figure 7), which



Figure 7. Stabiae, Villa San Marco, Nymphaeum, mosaic showing Phrixus and Helle. Second half of first century CE. Museo Archeologico di Napoli. (Photo © Vanni Archive/ Art Resource, NY)



Figure 8. Paestum, crater showing Phrixus and Helle riding the ram with Nephele looking on. Mid-fourth century BCE. Museo Archeologico di Napoli. (Courtesy of the Soprintendenza per i Beni Archeologici di Napoli, inv. 82411)

postdates Propertius's poetry,⁷⁴ as well as unspecified paintings, Hubbard proposes a comparison between the way a viewer would engage with a visual image of Helle and Phrixus and the way the dreamer of 2.26a (and by extension the reader) sees his dream. She observes that Propertius inserts the Helle simile near the beginning of the poem and leaves other features, such as the dolphin and the crags, until later, just as the artists depicting these scenes foregrounded the image of Helle drowning and placed elements of the environment, such as a dolphin and rocky crags, on the periphery. She writes that "the poem's order of development . . . seems



Figure 9. Fragment of Apulian bowl, showing Phrixus riding the ram and grasping the fallen Helle's hand. Ca. 330 BCE. Archaeological Museum, University of Münster. (Courtesy of the Archaeological Museum of the University of Münster, inv. 673, photo R. Dylka)

to be dictated by the order of perception,” implying that the dreamer sees his dream as a viewer would examine a mosaic or a painting with the same scene, moving his or her gaze from the central image out to the edge of the frame.

But this emphasis upon “derivation,” to use Hubbard’s term, from works of visual art with which the poet was familiar limits our appreciation of the poem’s relationship to images from visual art in certain important respects. By referring to extant representations of Helle and Phrixus, such as the Stabiae mosaic and other similar compositions, as templates for the composition of Propertius’s dreamscape, Hubbard is forced to elide completely the poet’s inclusion of elements such as Glaucus and the Nereids, who are rarely connected to Helle and Phrixus in the visual record, but have a prominent role in the dream description.⁷⁵ By the same token, in positing such a strict correlation between image and text, Hubbard exaggerates Helle’s role in the visual record in order to match the conspicuous role Propertius gave her. Hubbard’s claim that “when we look at the paintings of the

drowning Helle, our attention is first concentrated on her as the central and the powerfully emotional figure⁷⁶ unnecessarily distorts Helle's prominence in the visual depictions of her tale and in turn downplays the significance of Propertius's decision to promote her and delete Phrixus from his narrative.

The poet's elision of Phrixus from this scene has greater significance for the reader's engagement with this poem as a surrogate viewer than Hubbard's brief mention implies.⁷⁷ It is impossible to determine how many depictions of this subject existed while Propertius was writing, but the majority of surviving pieces, which should serve as an indication of the most popular artistic types, share one prominent feature. In all the depictions cited in the *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae*, Helle appears with her brother. In fact, there is no separate entry in the *LIMC* for "Helle"; to find depictions of her, one must search under the heading "Phrixos et Helle." Thus it appears that she was rarely, if ever, depicted alone in ancient art. In fact, she was depicted considerably less frequently than her brother. In the extant Greek and Roman representations where she does appear, she either rides beside him on the back of the ram or has already slipped off the animal's back and into the sea. Figure 8, a fourth-century krater from Paestum, shows the first type, while the painting from the fragment of a fourth-century Apulian bowl shown in figure 9 demonstrates the second, where Helle has already fallen and is sinking into the water, grasping her brother's hand.

It is not surprising that Phrixus is the focal point of these depictions, since his journey to Colchis on the back of the ram and the eventual fate of the ram's golden fleece are the aspects of the siblings' story that connect them to the network of heroic myth. Helle's drowning, by contrast, is but a moment along the continuum. This relationship between the siblings is corroborated by the record of the pair in the *Argonautica* of Apollonius of Rhodes, one of the few places in ancient literature where their story appears. In his tale of Jason's quest for the golden fleece, the poet refers to Helle's plight obliquely in the context of a lamentation (at *Argon.* 1.251–59 the women mourning the departure of the Argo lament that Phrixus did not perish with Helle). Later, Apollonius mentions the history of the fleece in passing, alluding only to Phrixus's journey (*Argon.* 2.1140–56).

Emphasis upon the central figure of the ram with its rider rather than upon the fallen Helle can also be corroborated by the fact that we know of at least three instances, including the Stabiae mosaic, in which the image of Phrixus and Helle was paired with an image of Europa riding her bull.⁷⁸ Two of the paintings, from the House of Sallust and the House of the Tragic Poet at Pompeii, are now destroyed, but the Europa mosaic from the Villa San Marco at Stabiae is extant and shows obvious parallels with the composition and execution of the Phrixus and Helle mosaic. In the complementary image, Europa atop the bull was the focus of

the composition, presumably echoing the centralized and prominent image of Phrixus atop the ram in its counterpart.

If, therefore, we accept that Propertius alludes in his Helle simile to painted or mosaic images with which he was familiar, as I think we should, we must account for the deliberate shift in emphasis from the journey of Phrixus and the golden ram to the sacrifice and transformation of Helle. By referring to a familiar subject for visual representation while eliminating its central character, Propertius both evokes a recognizable setting for the drowning of a female figure and reinterprets it by narrowing his readers' focus to Helle's transformation, a moment in the story, rather than Phrixus's successful journey, which ultimately moves the narrative forward. By isolating the moment of Helle's drowning, Propertius makes this incident the focal point of his simile's image; this in turn becomes a comment on Cynthia's place as the focal point of the dreamer's vision.

One way to approach the elision of Phrixus is to examine the poet's own presentation of himself as a viewer within the dream. Karl Keyssner, noting Phrixus's absence, posited an "emotional connection" between Phrixus and the poet in the poem.⁷⁹ If we look at the image of Phrixus and Helle in figure 10, a wall painting from Pompeii, we see that Phrixus extends an arm toward Helle in an attempt to rescue her (this is distinctly not the case in the Stabiae mosaic, where he looks in the opposite direction from his drowning sister).⁸⁰ Figure 10 shows brother and sister with gazes interlocked, united for a moment before she slips to her death. This visual relationship is mimicked in that between the dreamer and the image of his drowning lover in the dream. The dreamer alone sees Cynthia/Helle drowning, and she in turn calls out to him (*meum nomen*, line 12), establishing him as her potential rescuer. Just as Helle and Phrixus are an exclusive and isolated pair in many of our extant visual images, so too are Propertius and Cynthia the isolated participants of his dream.

Propertius pictorializes Helle's story not by evoking typical images of her, but by inverting the focus in these images to suit the conceit of his poem. Perhaps the revelation of the poet's position (*summo saxo*) in the final couplet comes as a surprise, but his presence in the dream as a voyeur has been apparent all along. He has reinterpreted the story of Helle's demise from the perspective of an onlooker from a distant vantage point and in the process has eroticized the image by lingering over the description of her body, extending the description of her vulnerability and showing her potential attractiveness to Glaucus. By removing Phrixus, the expected counterpart to Helle in the scene, Propertius has also reinterpreted the canonical relationship between the brother and sister, consistent in the iconography of images of the pair, in which she extends her arms toward him and he tries but fails to grasp her. The image of brother and sister separated while sailing together



Figure 10. Pompeii, fresco showing Phrixus riding the ram with Helle fallen behind. Mid-first century CE. Museo Archeologico di Napoli. (Courtesy of the Soprintendenza per i Beni Archeologici di Napoli; inv. 8889)

across a strait is reinterpreted as a story of lovers separated by a body of water, in which one watches in vain as the other fails in her journey.

In positioning himself on the shore as the viewer unable to rescue or reunite with his lover, Propertius dreams of himself in the position of helpless onlooker. This is, in fact, a typically female position in poetic contexts. Catullus's image of a statue-like Ariadne looking out over the sea as she confronted her desertion by Theseus in poem 64, lines 60–68, would have been for Propertius's readers the iconic scene of a shore-bound abandoned lover. As Victoria Rimell notes in her study of the *Heroides*, Ovid marks the shore as a feminine space, the place from which several of his abandoned heroines, Ariadne included, write their letters to lovers who have disappeared at sea.⁸¹

This feature is not exclusive to love elegy. In Vergil's *Aeneid*, for example, a powerless Dido is relegated to her citadel on the shore as Aeneas and his men prepare to leave Carthage and abandon her: “cum litora fervere late / prospiceres

arce ex summa" ("when you were viewing from the top of the citadel the beach busy with activity far and wide," 4.409–10). In her final words to Aeneas, as she envisions his journey away from her by sea, Dido curses him, wishing upon him the very fate that Cynthia herself suffers in poem 2.26a. G. P. Goold draws attention to this precedent in his note on lines 11–12, contrasting Cynthia's exclamation of the poet's name as she fights to stay above water in line 12—"saepe meum nomen iam peritura vocas" ("now on the verge of death you call my name repeatedly")—with Dido's curse on Aeneas: "spero equidem mediis, si quid pia numina possunt, / supplicia hausurum scopulis et nomine Dido / saepe vocaturum." ("But I hope, if the righteous gods have any power, that on the rocks in mid-ocean, you will drink down punishment calling Dido's name repeatedly," *Aen.* 4.382–84). Goold observes that Propertius imagines Cynthia calling his name "not for succour, but in remorse (cf. Vergil, *Aen.* 4.382ff.)."⁸²

Whether or not Dido's curse was present in the minds of readers of Propertius's dream, another story of lovers separated by a violent and ultimately deadly sea surely lurks behind the poet's description of Helle. Although the dream is set in the Ionian Sea (mentioned twice, at lines 2 and 14), his substitution of the Hellespont for the site of Cynthia's near-drowning, implicit in his use of Helle as an analogue, would certainly have called to mind the story of the lovers Hero and Leander, whose love affair ended when Leander drowned in the Hellespont during a violent storm. Unlike Cynthia, Leander is not rescued by a dolphin and brought safely to shore; rather, his dead body washes to shore, where Hero finds it after waiting patiently for him.

The story of Hero and Leander is given its most extensive treatment in two sources: Ovid's *Heroides* 18 and 19 and an epyllion by the fifth-century Greek epic poet Musaeus.⁸³ References to the story of Hero and Leander in Vergil (*G.* 3.258–63) and Horace (*Epist.* 1.3.3–5), who do not name the protagonists, suggest that it was a popular tale whose basic elements were well known to Augustan readers. Ovid embellished the story of the lovers as he adapted their tale into epistolary form, as did Musaeus, but certain basic elements can be determined. From the extant versions we can establish the setting of the Hellespont, the separation of the lovers on either side, Leander's brave swimming across the channel to see Hero, who guides him by lamplight from her perch atop a tower, their many nighttime trysts on her side of the strait, Leander's departure at dawn, his death at sea while attempting to cross during a storm, and Hero's suicide beside his body once she discovers it washed up on the shore.

Theodore Papanghelis reads the story of Hero and Leander, likely known to Propertius and his contemporaries from a lost Hellenistic version, as the most important precedent for Propertius's meditation on love and drowning in what he

calls poem 2.26b (lines 29–58 of poem 2.26): that is, the fragmentary poem that follows the intact twenty lines of 2.26a and the fragment of 2.26b (lines 21–28 of the larger 2.26).⁸⁴ Papanghelis is especially interested in the image of the lovers' bodies joined together in death upon the shore after a violent shipwreck during a storm (lines 43 and 57–58), which evokes the scene of Hero's suicide. In Musaeus's account, the mingling of their bodies in death is explicitly eroticized (lines 340–43). This erotic aspect certainly resonates with the images of the later portions of poem 2.26 and recognition of the allusion fits neatly with Papanghelis's larger argument about the mingling of themes of love and death (*"In Amore Mori"* is the title of his chapter) here and elsewhere in Propertius's elegies. Yet despite his multiple observations about the similarities between poem 2.26b and Ovid's *Heroides* 18 and 19, especially where they seem to demonstrate the influence of a missing predecessor text on the story of Hero and Leander, Papanghelis neglects poem 2.26a in his discussion of the influence of this tale.

By contrast, Victoria Rimell has made a connection between Propertius's poem about a near-drowning and Ovid's fictional letters between Hero and Leander that takes us back to the poem's first twenty lines and the precedent of the drowning Helle for the drowning Leander. Noting Propertius's influence on Ovid, she observes that poem 2.26a was a "stimulus" to Ovid's letter-writers, especially where they express concern with immortality and the endurance of a *nomen*. She observes that in 2.26a Propertius "watches from the clifftops as fraught as a Hero or a Dido,"⁸⁵ thus linking the two abandoned female lovers, not only by disposition but also by their physical position on the shore and their similar helplessness. Just as Cynthia acts as a drowning Leander, Propertius positions himself as an observing Hero. An exploration of this analogy will show that it is the female lover's position on the shore specifically as an observer that is significant for our understanding of the poet's position in this poem. The image of Hero looking out from her high perch as Leander swims the channel provides an important visual parallel for the positions of the lovers Cynthia and Propertius in the poet's description of his nightmare.

Ovid presents Hero in *Heroides* 19 as a spectator, looking out to sea as she writes to Leander and hopes in vain for his arrival. Some representative examples illustrate this point. In line 21, Hero is described as "mare prospiciens"; in lines 50–51, she is said to look out for Leander, wondering whether he is in the middle of the strait: "an medio possis, quaerimus, esse freto. / et modo prospicimus, timida modo voce precamur" ("I ask whether you can be in the middle of the strait. And now I look forth, now I pray in a timid voice"). In lines 191–92, just before she reveals a dream in which she saw a dead dolphin wash up on the shore, she turns toward the sea and feels great fear: "sed mihi, caeruleas quotiens obvertor ad

undas, / nescio quo pavidum frigore pectus hebet" ("But as often as I turn toward the cerulean waves, my fearful breast is cooled by some chill"). Hero's characterization as a viewer, hoping for a glimpse of Leander moving through the waves, is connected to her position on land, in particular in the lofty perch of her tower, which affords her a wide view of the sea.

The characterization of the land-bound Hero as a viewer looking out to the sea for her lost lover may remind us of another abandoned lover, also looking out helplessly from the shore. It is likely that the story of Ariadne's waking to see her treacherous lover Theseus sailing out to sea would have been evoked by Propertius's account of his dream vision, from the shore, of the treacherous Cynthia in mid-sea. In a way, his vision of the confessional and contrite Cynthia drowning after a shipwreck fulfills a wish that Ariadne will never see fulfilled by Theseus. Ariadne explicitly contrasts her position on the shore with that of Theseus, who has sailed without her: "quae legis, ex illo, Theseu, tibi litore mitto / unde tuam sine me vela tulere ratem" ("The words which you now read, Theseus, I send you from that shore from which the sails carried off your ship without me," *Her.* 10.3–4). As time passes and Theseus's ship disappears, the shore becomes a place from which Ariadne can only look out in vain for a lover who will never return: "luna fuit; specto, siquid nisi litora cernam. / quod videant oculi nil nisi litus habent" ("The moon was in the sky; I look out to see if there is anything but shore before me. As far as my eyes can see, they find nothing except shore," lines 17–18). Like Hero, Ariadne, abandoned on the shore and helpless to intervene, becomes a spectator from her marginal position. This predicament recalls Catullus's initial description of Ariadne as she is depicted on the coverlet on the wedding couch at the wedding of Peleus and Thetis in poem 64. Our first image of her in this famous ekphrasis reveals her looking out from the shore and seeing Theseus departing: "namque fluentis onso prospectans litore Diae / Thesea cedentem celeri cum classe tuetur" ("For there, looking out from the shore of Dia resounding with waves, [Ariadne] sees Theseus sailing away with his swift fleet," lines 52–53). While Catullus's Ariadne realizes that she has been abandoned just as the reality of her vision begins to register with her, Propertius's seemingly realistic vision is dispelled just as he registers his own appearance on the shore in the dream.

Paired Images in the Dreamscape

The association between the pairs of lovers Hero and Leander and Ariadne and Theseus extended beyond literature into painted images. The extant evidence for paintings depicting these pairs offers helpful visual paradigms for imagining the scene described by Propertius in his dream. Ariadne's story of

abandonment by Theseus on the shore of Naxos and subsequent rescue by Dionysus and his retinue was one of the most popular sources for painted representation in Roman wall painting.⁸⁶ In painting, these episodes tend to be separated into individual scenes, capturing either the moment she realizes her abandonment or the moment she is found by Dionysus. Ariadne is frequently depicted in the foreground of such representations. To be sure, her alluring, semi-nude body is the focal point of these images for the external viewer, but appreciation of her appearance beyond its erotic allure is also necessary, for it provides a model for the viewer's comprehension of the scene's significance. As we see in a representative example from a wall painting from a house at Pompeii (fig. 11), Theseus's ship is often depicted receding out to sea, already some distance away, but certainly visible to the figures on the shore.⁸⁷ His departure is immediately recognized as an abandonment: the boat sails away from the figures on the shore, and its passengers seemingly take no notice of their gestures and emotional reactions. As David Fredrick points out in his discussion of the scenes of Ariadne's abandonment, her act of looking from a seated position (rather than standing and, presumably, trying to attract Theseus's attention more forcefully) "emphasizes her own immobility and lack of power."⁸⁸ Furthermore, the orientation of Ariadne's gaze (as well as those of others in her presence) toward the departing ship guides the viewer's gaze, and hence interpretation of the scene, through her point of view, much as we see with Ariadne's first-person narration in Ovid's *Heroides* 10.

We have far fewer examples of the story of Hero and Leander depicted in Roman wall painting, but the evidence preserved shows that a painting of Hero and Leander appeared in a room with a painting of Ariadne and Theseus in at least two Pompeian houses. Figure 12 shows the paintings from cubiculum D in the well-preserved House of the Vettii, where they were originally displayed opposite one another on the north and south walls of the room.⁸⁹ This combination makes sense: both scenes feature a seascape, with a female figure on the shore and a male figure in mid-sea. As Jaś Elsner comments, "In each case the lovers are separated by water with the female looking out at the male in action who sails away from his lover (in the case of Theseus) or swims toward her (in the case of Leander)."⁹⁰ The similarity in composition emphasizes a fundamental difference between the stories, which Elsner describes as "a play of desire defeated and desire fulfilled."⁹¹ Certainly Ariadne's desire for unity with Theseus has been thwarted, but it is not so obvious that desire has been fulfilled in the image of Hero and Leander. While Leander is shown swimming toward his lover, and thus intent upon "fulfilling" his (and her) desire, he is still far from his goal of reaching shore. Given this ambiguity, his eventual drowning could not have been far from the minds of the viewers of this image. Both figures on the shore are gesturing toward the male figure at sea. In



Figure 11. Pompeii, house IX.2.5, room C, north wall, fresco of Ariadne looking out at Theseus's ship. Mid-first century CE. (Courtesy of the German Archaeological Institute, photo N. Hoffmann, Neg. D-DAI-ROM 31.1744)



Figure 12. Pompeii, House of the Vettii, cubiculum D, frescoes depicting Ariadne looking out at Theseus's ship and Hero and Leander. Mid-first century CE. (Courtesy of the Ministero dei Beni e delle Attività Culturali e del Turismo—Soprintendenza Speciale per i Beni Archeologici di Pompei, Ercolano e Stabia)

Ariadne's case, the gesture communicates astonishment and grief; in Hero's, it suggests guidance and hope. Each painted image conveys a contrast between the action of the male figure at sea and the immobility of the female on shore.

Propertius's dream description, which evokes these stories in both their literary and their visual incarnations, provides a third perspective on "the space over which desire and separation are enacted," to borrow Elsner's description of the sea's role in these stories.⁹² It does so by recasting the image of Helle drowning as a scene of lovers separated by the sea. Combining elements of the stories of a treacherous sailor who abandons his helpless lover on shore with the story of the lover who risks drowning in an attempt to swim to his shore-bound beloved, also helpless to intervene, Propertius's reference to Helle triggers associations between multiple myths. As helpless as Ariadne and Hero, Propertius plays the role of a Phrixus stuck on the shore without his ram. Rather than ride an animal to shore, he must rely on the intervention of a dolphin to return his lover/sister to him.

The story of Helle's drowning is one of futility and helplessness. Although it has an important etiological function, her untimely death serves no narrative purpose in connection with the delivery of the golden fleece and is merely incidental to the aftermath of her brother's successful voyage. As we have seen in the images of Helle drowning, Phrixus is often shown tantalizingly close to saving her—almost touching her—but yet unable to prevent her from slipping under the

waves. Thus the pointlessness of her death is matched by the inability of the one closest to her to do anything to prevent it. What does Propertius achieve by citing Helle's story as the descriptive model for the retelling of his dream? Perhaps her story is a template for the theme of commemoration that recurs throughout the poem.⁹³ I have tried to show that by reconfiguring Helle as a lover, Propertius assumes the place of her brother, who is normally associated and shown in scenes with her. Acknowledging, as virtually all commentators do, that the poet's reference to Helle evokes depictions of her story in visual art, I have explored additional possible associations that the poet's description brings to mind. In light of these associations, I have argued that Helle drowning is just one figure in a larger image, whose counterpart is revealed in the poem's final lines. Helle/Cynthia is certainly the focal point of the dreamer's imagination and the reader's mind's eye, but consideration of the one looking and his experience of looking within the dream itself is also paramount for our appreciation of the experience of "seeing" this dream.

Furthermore, the visual paradigm that Propertius suggests not only reflects the marginality of an abandoned lover, but highlights the narrator's predicament as a marginal observer in his own dream. The deliberate relegation of the observer to the sidelines of both the landscape and the poem emphasizes the dreamer's liminal position as a spectator of his own dream. Even a dreamer who has witnessed himself in action in a dream must assume the role of observer upon waking and relating the content of his dream, perhaps increasing the distance between dreamer and dreamed image with this retrospective point of view. The distance between viewer and viewed object, which is already a feature of the landscape of the dream narrative, is reinforced when told as though from the perspective of the viewer of a familiar painted image.

Pendants, Visible and Invisible, in Roman Painting and Poetry

Boucher wrote about the ability of visual images in Propertius's poetry to "trigger the reader's imagination,"⁹⁴ thus allowing the reader to make connections between images based upon recognized similarities and contrasts. The reader's interpretive scope increases when images within a poem are considered in conjunction with one another because, as Boucher explains, images have a relationship to one another that "links" them (his term) and is separate from the logical presentation of ideas. In her essay on Propertius 1.3, Valladares connects Boucher's ideas about the particular relationship of images in Propertius's poetry to the allusive relationship between mythological references in Roman painting.⁹⁵ She goes beyond the work of previous critics in demonstrating that Propertius's

analogies between the sleeping Cynthia and three sleeping female characters from mythology in the opening lines of poem 1.3 not only evoke representations of these characters in wall painting, but also suggest multiple roles for the narrator himself as he engages with the sleeper, for his role as viewer shifts as each new sleeper is introduced. On the one hand, he is a Bacchus to Cynthia's Ariadne, poised to seduce her; on the other, he is a satyr or Pentheus, about to be rejected by a sleeping maenad. As Valladares argues, Propertius adds a level of complexity to his poem's imagery by anticipating his readers' ability not only to visualize the poem's images with paradigms from visual art, but to create connections between them, performing a process of association that would have been honed in the readers' experiences of viewing painted images within the homes of their contemporaries.

Having established that the images suggested by the poem's opening similes expand rather than narrow our interpretive possibilities, Valladares interprets the simile of Io and Argus in lines 19–20 of poem 1.3 not only as an evocation of this image in visual art, but specifically as a counterpoint to the poet's self-declared role as Bacchus earlier in line 9 and his suggested role as Bacchus to the sleeping Ariadne of line 1. On its own, the analogy with Argus suggests certain associations between the famous vigilant viewer from mythology and the narrator of poem 1.3 watching over his sleeping lover, but considered in conjunction with the poet's earlier guise as Bacchus, the reference to Argus encourages the reader to reinterpret the power of the male viewer's gaze as frustrated rather than dominant. Valladares's analysis ultimately shows that consideration of the poem's images in relation to one another allows the reader to appreciate them beyond their iconographic parallels: by contemplating instead what they communicate about the dynamics between viewer and viewed, a perspective suggested by the compositions of the works of visual art they evoke.

As Valladares demonstrates, a reader's associations between the image of Bacchus approaching the sleeping Ariadne and that of Argus watching over his charge Io within poem 1.3 are formed specifically from the reader's appreciation of the similarities and differences between the images. In similar fashion, a viewer's associations between painted images in a room would be inspired and enhanced as much by the paintings' thematic differences as by their formal similarities. This impulse also underlies the viewer's appreciation of the juxtaposition of images of Ariadne and Hero in a room in the House of the Vettii, as discussed above.

Images with this relationship to one another are often called "pendant images," a phenomenon first identified by Karl Schefold. Schefold distinguished "pendants" from "cycles" of images, defining pendants as groups of images within a room, related through "more significant relationships than mere association in the course of the narrative."⁹⁶ One common component of the allusive relationship between

a cluster of mythological references within the frame of one poem, such as we see in poem 1.3, and a series of pendant paintings contained within a room of a Roman house, or connected through a viewing axis within different rooms of a house, is the inference by the creator of the images that their reader or viewer will engage with the allusions to mythology, whether described or painted, by making connections between them. Thus the one contemplating the images will create relationships between them based upon his or her perception of shared components that may not be explicit in any individual story, but come to light only through comparison.

Eleanor Winsor Leach describes the viewer's process of "cross-referencing" analogous visual patterns in the painted images arrayed in a room.⁹⁷ Using the example of the room from the Boscotrecase villa cited at the beginning of this chapter, Leach demonstrates how cross-referencing would work between the juxtaposed paintings of Polyphemus/Galatea and Perseus/Andromeda. In short, the viewer of these images would initially connect the paintings through their formal similarities in composition and color. Closer investigation would inspire the viewer to note and appreciate contrasts between the subjects of the images and the narrative components of each. In a similar vein, Bettina Bergmann's work on the House of the Tragic Poet at Pompeii demonstrates that a viewer's recognition of formal similarities between paintings in the atrium, such as those depicting Briseis and Juno, for example, would have invited him or her to appreciate contrasts in the images' themes or the stories of the characters they depicted.⁹⁸

We may profitably apply the concept of the pendant, as Valladares has done for poem 1.3, to the allusive mythological imagery of poem 2.26a. The poet's simile of Helle as a complement to his vision of Cynthia works for the reader like a viewer's connection between two pendant paintings: similarities between the stories of two drowning girls inspire contemplation of their differences. One central difference is that Helle dies after falling into the water, while Cynthia is rescued from a watery death. This crucial difference is elaborated through the poet's reference to other mythological stories, which in turn function as additional pendants to the initial image of Helle. Imagining her as a Nereid seen and desired by the sea god Glaucus, the poet reconceives Cynthia's (and Helle's) death as a transformation into a goddess. When the poet later imagines Cynthia as Arion riding a dolphin in a scene of rescue, Cynthia, escorted to shore on the back of an animal, gets precisely what Helle was denied. It is profitable to think about the three images evoked by the poet in an interactive relationship with one another rather than as parallel modes for envisioning the substance of his dream.

There is an additional level on which the concept of pendant images is relevant to our understanding of the images evoked in poem 2.26a. I demonstrate above

that the image of Helle created by the simile in poem 2.26a recalls but then alters the composition of her image familiar from visual art, and thus suggests a connection to visual images of other characters that are not mentioned explicitly in the poem: namely, those depicting Ariadne and Hero. We might call this process one of creating “invisible” pendants. The stories of Helle, Hero, and Ariadne have obvious thematic parallels: in each tale a male and a female character who share an emotional bond are separated by the sea. In poem 2.26a, the relationship between these tales is suggested by the poet’s application of the story of the separation of the siblings Phrixus and Helle at sea to the context of the lovers, Propertius and Cynthia, who are separated by the sea in the dream. By alluding to the abandonment of Ariadne and Hero, whose stories were also likely associated in visual art, the poet aligns himself with these heroines both thematically and physically.

Just as compositional similarities among juxtaposed paintings can engage a viewer to recognize and appreciate their thematic differences, so too can consideration of thematic similarities inspire the viewer to contemplate the relevance of the paintings’ formal differences. In the case of Propertius’s invisible pendants, the theme of the dangerous sea that separates close pairs links the story of Helle, which is already a “pendant” to the image of the drowning Cynthia, with those of Ariadne and Hero, whose own relationship is established in both textual and visual sources. Recognition of the primary thematic connection between the stories allows the reader to acknowledge and contemplate their differences. Structural differences between the tales, such as the gender of the characters and their positions at sea or on the shore are, in turn, brought into relief by the juxtaposition of the stories in the reader’s mind. Recognition of the play between similarity and difference within the scenes yields important information about how Propertius acknowledges and challenges his readers’ expectations based upon their familiarity with visual art. By rearranging certain formal elements of a familiar scene, such as emphasizing Helle’s demise and eliding Phrixus, the poet adapts the scene to fit the context of his dreamscape and allows the possibility of comparisons with other scenes that might not have initially come to a reader’s mind.

Conclusion

The poet’s initial analogy between Cynthia and Helle introduces the realm of mythology to the description of his dream and seems to inspire his subsequent inclusion of mythological figures associated with the sea, such as Glaucus, the Nereids, and Arion, in conjunction with his narration of it. Likewise, by suggesting a painted image of Helle’s drowning with his pictorial simile, Propertius activates in his readers’ imaginations the potential for creating their

own associations between this image and others compositionally or thematically similar to it. We might say that a chain of visualization moves from poet to reader. As Propertius is inspired by his vision of Cynthia in the dream to envision a scene of Helle drowning, his evocation and selective presentation of this scene in turn inspires the reader to envision his or her own series of images and create a series of associations inspired by knowledge of textual precedents and artistic representations.

As I have shown, to claim that Propertius “models” his poem on a work of visual art with a particular type of composition limits the ways in which we can interpret his use of mythological allusion, visual language, and reference to painted images. The manner in which he combines these elements in his dream poem is more fluid than generally acknowledged and allows his readers greater freedom of association. As we read poem 2.26a, we encounter references to Helle, Glaucus, and Arion, characters who are loosely connected because of their association with the sea. But their combination within the context of a dream description aligns them in a novel way by allowing them to take on meanings specific to the relationship between Propertius and Cynthia, especially as we begin to understand the role of metamorphosis in the poem. The references to Helle, Glaucus, and Arion represent pendants for the possible outcomes of a drowning at sea: death, immortality as a sea divinity, or rescue. Furthermore, the poet’s particular version of Helle’s drowning in his simile evokes additional scenes from mythology that are not immediately suggested by the reference to her but that make sense when considering the entire visual tableau of the dream.

The concept of the pendant may also be helpful as we approach the discussion of Propertius’s next stand-alone dream poem, elegy 3.3. Although the nightmare of 2.26a differs notably from the inspiration dream of 3.3 in content, poem 3.3 shares several features with its predecessor, including references to viewing within the dream and several vivid descriptions that suggest parallels with works of visual art. As complements to one another, each poem places into an oneiric context the central concerns of Propertius’s elegiac poetry: his relationship with Cynthia and his identity as a writer of elegiac over hexameter verse.



4 The Visual Dreamscape of Propertius 3.3

Propertius 3.3 is an initiation poem in which the poet reveals his dream of an encounter with Apollo and the Muses atop Mount Helicon. Despite the fact that poem 3.3 is not the first poem in Propertius's book 3, it is generally agreed that it provides the culmination of a tripartite introduction to the book, which marks a shift in direction from the previous two.¹ Thus, it is an appropriate point for the description of an initiation scene, and an attendant "invocation" of the Muses, to inspire the poet's new undertaking. That Propertius specifically evokes the initiation scenes recounted in the works of his predecessors Hesiod, Callimachus, and Ennius is of paramount importance for our understanding of this poem.² It confirms Propertius's alternative poetic lineage by borrowing elements, such as the site of Mount Helicon and the vehicle of the dream, from the experiences of his "new" predecessors. But my analysis of the poem in this chapter also highlights Propertius's deviation from the established parameters of this experience.

Narrated in the first person, Propertius 3.3 has a balanced structure in which verbal address alternates with visual description, and *recusatio* with revelation of the themes appropriate for Propertius's poetry.³ The first half of the poem (lines 1–26) reviews the narrator's misguided attempt to compose epic poetry and concludes with Apollo's admonition against doing so. The second half (lines 27–52) presents the poet's new direction, which is characterized by a description of the grotto of the Muses and an address by one of its inhabitants, Calliope. In keeping with its bipartite structure, the poem displays other hybrid qualities: it combines elements of the *recusatio* poems and dream-initiation poems of Propertius's predecessors, just as it mixes the elements of the epiphany/message dream (in which an important message is imparted to the dreamer) and the symbolic dream (where the dreamer must decode the dream's visual cues in order to make sense of its

message). In this composition, Propertius is unmistakably aware of his inheritance of a poetic legacy, but his poem unfolds in a dreamscape that reveals elements of his own poetics, even as it elaborates on the pre-established rites of poetic initiation. The poet's major innovations here are his emphasis on visual description and his self-consciousness about the dream-setting as context for his initiation.

This chapter presents a close reading of Propertius's description of his dream in poem 3.3, with emphasis upon the poem's visual imagery. In the process of teasing out its meaning, I compare the poem's "visual dynamics" to two works of visual art. The first, a painted room from the villa at Boscoreale on the Bay of Naples, is roughly contemporary with Propertius's own lifetime. The paintings of the Boscoreale room boast an elaborate interplay between urban and rustic vistas, culminating in the representation of a cave. I consider how the decisions of the painter also provide insights regarding Propertius's choice of images and the manner in which he conveys them. In the second instance, I examine the visual strategies employed in a Hellenistic marble relief, signed by one Archelaos of Priene and found at Bovillae, a site in the Alban Hills located a short distance from Rome.⁴ This relief shares not only figural but also compositional and dynamic features with Propertius's initiation poem. The intent is not to establish that works of art like these either did influence or could have influenced Propertius's poem—at least not directly. Instead, I suggest that considering works like these in conjunction with one another can help to reveal and illuminate mechanisms at work in the poem itself.

These works of visual art, although rendered in different media and created in different time periods, share certain thematic elements with Propertius 3.3, including the cave, the sculpted image, and the juxtaposition of items found in nature with man-made objects. My acknowledgment of these shared features serves as a point of departure for an investigation that is intended to help us understand how these features might have encouraged certain modes of viewing in both visual and literary contexts. As I demonstrate, the key technique employed for eliciting viewer response in all of these cases is the creation of the appearance of something believable to the viewer, which, at the same time, masks for the viewer (or reader) the techniques employed to achieve that appearance. The effect, in the end, is to encourage the viewer to engage with and respond to the image as though it were in fact real. This illusionism is evident in the realistic vistas receding away from the flat planes of walls in the painting style popular for most of Propertius's life—the Second Style or Architectural Style.⁵ It is likewise inherent in sculpted images that attempt to show animation within their static forms, and it is also an essential component of dream images, which deceive dreamers into thinking they are real.⁶

By studying the interplay between illusionism and viewing in visual art, I hope to establish the complex ways in which Propertius creates something convincingly “dreamlike” in his account of poetic initiation.

Poem 3.3 is often mentioned in discussions of Propertius’s visual style and the influence of visual art upon his poetry. Echoing the commentary of Max Rothstein, Jean-Paul Boucher suspected that the poem’s imagery was modeled on a painting, writing that “Le poète suit un modèle pictural, le tableau d’un Mouséion.”⁷ Margaret Hubbard has also cited our poem as evidence for her observation that “when Propertius sees most vividly, he sees not the actual and contemporary in itself, but the ideal and sharp pictorial representation of something like.”⁸ More recently, Christine Walde has described the setting of poem 3.3 with the term “Kunstraum,”⁹ and Jacqueline Clarke has observed that the poet “makes use of colours in 3.3 for pictorial effect.”¹⁰ In each of these cases, however, there is virtually no recognition of the possible relevance of these connections to visual representations for our appreciation of the poem as a description of a dream. Before commencing our effort to do this, however, let us pause to consider the poem itself, in full:

Poem 3.3

Visus eram molli recubans Heliconis in umbra,
Bellerophontei qua fluit umor equi,
reges, Alba, tuos et regum facta tuorum,
tantum operis, nervis hiscere posse meis;
parvaque tam magnis admoram fontibus ora, 5
unde pater sitiens Ennius ante bibit;
et cecinit Curios fratres et Horatia pila,
regiaque Aemilia vecta tropaea rate,
victricesque moras Fabii pugnamque sinistram
Cannensem et versos ad pia vota deos, 10
Hannibalemque Lares Romana sede fugantis,
anseris et tutum voce fuisse Iovem:
cum me Castalia speculans ex arbore Phoebus
sic ait aurata nixus ad antra lyra:
‘Quid tibi cum tali, demens, est flumine? quis te 15
carminis heroi tangere iussit opus?
non hic ulla tibi speranda est fama, Properti:
mollia sunt parvis prata terenda rotis;
ut tuus in scamno iactetur saepe libellus,

quem legat exspectans sola puella virum.	20
cur tua praescriptos evecta est pagina gyros?	
non est ingenii cumba gravanda tui.	
alter remus aquas alter tibi radat harenas,	
tutus eris: medio maxima turba mari est.'	
dixerat, et plectro sedem mihi monstrat eburno,	25
quo nova muscoso semita facta solo est.	
hic erat affixis viridis spelunca lapillis,	
pendebantque cavis tympana pumicibus,	
orgia Musarum et Sileni patris imago	
fictilis et calami, Pan Tegeae, tui;	30
et Veneris dominae volucres, mea turba, columbae	
tingunt Gorgoneo punica rostra lacu;	
diversaeque novem sortitae iura Puellae	
exercent teneras in sua dona manus:	
haec hederas legit in thyrsos, haec carmina nervis	35
aptat, at illa manu textit utraque rosam.	
e quarum numero me contigit una dearum	
(ut reor a facie, Calliopea fuit):	
'Contentus niveis semper vectabere cynis,	
nec te fortis equi ducet ad arma sonus.	40
nil tibi sit rauco praeconia classica cornu	
flare, nec Aonium tingere Marte nemus;	
aut quibus in campis Mariano proelia signo	
stent et Teutonicas Roma refringat opes,	
barbarus aut Suevo perfusus sanguine Rhenus	45
saucia maerenti corpora vectet aqua.	
quippe coronatos alienum ad limen amantis	
nocturnaeque canes ebria signa fugae,	
ut per te clausas sciat excantare puellas,	
qui volet austeros arte ferire viros.'	50
taliam Calliope, lymphisque a fonte petitis	
ora Philitea nostra rigavit aqua.	

[I appeared (seemed) in a dream, reclining in the soft shade of Helicon, where the spring of Bellerophon's horse flows, to be able to sing accompanied by my lyre, Alba, your kings and their deeds, a great undertaking; and I had moved my small mouth to the powerfully gushing spring, from which Father Ennius once drank in his thirst and sang of the Curian brothers and

the Horatian spears, and the royal trophies borne by the Aemilian boat, and the victorious delays of Fabius, and the disastrous battle at Cannae and the gods turned to answer pious prayers; the Lares routing Hannibal from their Roman hearth, and Jupiter saved by the cackling of the geese, when Apollo, spying me from the Castalian wood, addressed me as follows, leaning on his golden lyre at the cave's entrance:

"What business do you have with such a stream, madman? Who ordered you to take up the work of heroic epic? There's no hope for you to gain any fame from this endeavor, Propertius. Small wheels should run along soft grass, so that your book might often be displayed on the bench for a lonely girl to read while she waits for her man. Why has your page veered from its prescribed route? The small boat of your genius should not be weighed down. You will be safe if one oar plies the water while the other scrapes the sand: the storms are most severe in the middle of the sea." After he spoke, he showed me with his ivory pick a place where a new path had been made in the mossy ground.

Here was a green grotto decorated with small stones, and drums hung down from the hollow pumice, as did the instruments of the Muses and a clay image of Father Silenus, and your reed pipes, Tegean Pan; and the doves of Mistress Venus, my crowd, dip their purple beaks in the Gorgon's pool; and the nine Girls, each assigned her own task, apply their supple hands to their own work: this one plucks ivy for a thyrsus, this one fits songs to the lyre, while that one weaves roses together with both hands. One of the goddesses from the group touched me (from her appearance, I think it was Calliope):

"You will always be content to ride on snowy swans; the resounding of the war-horse's hooves will not lead you into battle. You have no concern with sounding the alarm on a blaring trumpet, nor should you taint the Aonian grove with Mars's business; nor do the fields where the troops are arrayed under Marius's standards and where Rome repels Teutonic power concern you; likewise, where the barbarian Rhine carries wounded bodies in its sorrowful water flecked with Suebian gore is no concern of yours. For you will sing of garlanded lovers waiting on another's threshold and the drunken tokens of a nighttime escape, so that through your words, whoever wants to skillfully outsmart harsh husbands will learn how to charm the girls they sequester."

Calliope spoke thus, drew some water from the spring, and wet my mouth with the water Philitas drank.]

Seeing, Appearing, and Being Seen

Propertius begins poem 3.3 with the verb *visus eram* (line 1), recalling the standard vocabulary for describing an epiphany/message dream.¹¹ Yet his use of *visus eram* in poem 3.3 is distinctly different from its counterparts elsewhere, for *visus eram* does not refer in this case to the sudden and surprising appearance of the dream visitor; rather, the verb refers to the poet's appearance of acting a certain way within the dream. But this deviation is not immediately apparent. It is only when we reach the infinitives *hiscere* and *posse* in line 4, to which *visus eram* is connected grammatically, that we realize that the verb refers to the improbability of his composing a poem on Ennian themes, as he "seems" poised to do. This separation between verbs might remind us of the gap between *vidi* and *ducere* in the opening couplet of poem 2.26a. By deferring the infinitives, the poet seems also to allude to the physical impossibility of his presence in the setting atop Mount Helicon in a sort of self-epiphany. Instead of being the passive recipient of a vision, he himself is the vision. In addition to referring to the apparent action of the dream, *visus eram* refers to the dream's illusion of action while the dreamer actually lies asleep and motionless.

Propertius's line 1 quite specifically recalls Ennius's epiphany of his epic mentor: "*visus Homerus adesse poeta*" (Skutsch 1.3 [Cicero, *Acad.* 2.51]). We learn from ancient testimonia on this line that Homer had appeared to Ennius in a dream and proclaimed that his soul would enter the poet's body, thus making Ennius "a second Homer."¹² But rather than become embodied by Ennius, Propertius conjures his predecessor (called "pater Ennius" in line 6) through a list of themes taken from Ennius's *Annales*, which come to life before the eyes of both dreamer and reader in lines 7–12. Swimming up before the dreamer's eyes, Ennius and his themes seem to resemble specters of the dead. But this invocation of the poet's "inspiration" by Ennius is, in fact, a decoy, just as *visus eram* had set up the false expectation of an epiphany. For, as it turns out, both inspiration and epiphany are deferred until Apollo's appearance later in the poem. By combining the familiar formula of *videre* in the passive voice to introduce the dream with its unusual first-person form, Propertius recasts Ennius's vision of Homer as a poet's dream of himself. This is significant because it reflects the mechanism at work in the poem: by borrowing elements from the works of his predecessors, he converts the already established theme of poetic initiation into a distinctly Propertian experience—a self-referential dream. As *visus eram* implies that the dreamer is both viewer of and actor in the dream, Propertius lets the reader know that he will exploit the properties

of the dream not just as a mode of communication but as an explicitly self-reflexive visual experience.

The first image in poem 3.3 is that of the poet reclining in the pleasant shade of Mount Helicon: “*molli recubans Heliconis in umbra*” (line 1). As discussed above, the mention of Helicon introduces the setting as one appropriate for poetic inspiration. Furthermore, the participle *recubans* and mention of the shade (*umbra*) would likely recall for the reader the opening of Vergil’s first *Eclogue*, in which the shepherd Tityrus reclines in the shade to compose poetry.¹³ By evoking its Vergilian predecessor, this image of the poet reclining immediately suggests that the dream will feature the composition of poetry, and is therefore programmatic in this sense. But this poem immediately departs from its predecessors by creating a dream within a dream—a scene where the sleeping dreamer sees himself reclining (*recubans*) under the gaze of a second onlooker, Apollo, the would-be epiphany figure, whose appearance is deferred until line 13. Like the poem’s reader and the dreamer himself, Apollo witnesses the narrator’s actions from a detached position. So the dreamer not only sees himself but sees himself in a position that resembles sleeping.

The verb *recubo* simply implies that the narrator is reclining as he might at a banquet (this is the primary meaning of the verb), rather than in a state of sleep, but it is important to recognize that his supine position is like that of a sleeper whose pose makes him available to the viewer’s gaze. This is the only use of *recubo* in all of Propertius’s poetry, but the poet uses the cognate verb *accubuit* in poem 1.3 to describe the sleeping Andromeda in a simile for the sleeping Cynthia, whom he has come upon after a night out and whom he famously describes from the perspective of a voyeur: “*qualis et accubuit primo Cepheia somno / libera iam duris cotibus Andromede . . . / talis visa mihi mollem spriare quietem / Cynthia non certis nixa caput manibus*” (“just as Andromeda, daughter of Cepheus, lay in first sleep now free from her tough chains . . . thus did Cynthia seem to me to breathe gentle sleep, resting her head upon her unstable hands,” lines 3–4, 7–8). R. J. Baker notes in his commentary on poem 1.3 that the verb *accumbo* (to “lie” or “recline”) is not normally used to describe sleep.¹⁴ In this earlier poem, the verb’s primary meaning is transferred onto the sleeper’s pose.

It is not simply the similarity between reclining and sleeping that is significant in poem 3.3. The suggestion of a visual relationship between Apollo and the poet in poem 3.3 that is similar to the one between observer and sleeper is reinforced by Propertius’s choice of the verb *speculari* to describe Apollo’s initial observation of the poet: “*me Castalia speculari ex arbore Phoebus*” (line 13). This line contains the sole instance of that verb in Propertius’s corpus. The phrase “*speculator amicae*,” however, is used at 2.29b.31–32 in Cynthia’s characterization of the

narrator gazing surreptitiously upon her as she slept: “quid tu matutinus,’ ait ‘speculator amicae? / me similem vestris moribus esse putas?” (“What!’ she said, ‘do you come as an early-morning spy on your lover? Do you think I am like you men in my ways?’”). The reference to vision in *speculator* echoes the emphasis upon vision earlier in the passage. First, the poet claims that he spied on Cynthia in order to see (*visere*) if she slept alone: “mane erat, et volui, si sola quiesceret illa, visere” (“It was dawn, and I wanted to see if she was sleeping alone,” lines 23–24). Then he is spellbound by her beautiful appearance (*visa*) as she sleeps: “obstupui: non illa mihi formosior umquam / visa” (“I was amazed: she had never seemed/ appeared more beautiful to me,” lines 25–26). From this brief study of the words *speculator* (poem 2.29b) and *speculans* (poem 3.3), it seems that the verb *speculari* connotes, for Propertius, the act of spying on someone who is prone and unaware of being observed, whether in sleep, as in Cynthia’s case, or absorbed in poetic composition, as in Propertius’s.

By using a verb of seeing within the action of the dream, as opposed to writing that Apollo merely “came upon” or “interrupted” him while lying beside the stream, Propertius draws attention to the visual dimension of dreaming itself. Furthermore, by making this act of viewing one where a standing but hidden viewer watches the action of a recumbent figure unaware that he is being watched, the poet seems to characterize this act of viewing as a type of voyeurism. This specular relationship is reflected in the structure of the lines as well. Propertius aligns the present participles *recubans* and *speculans* by placing them in the same position within their respective lines before prepositional phrases that describe locations. Apollo, at this point in the poem, assumes the position of the reader, who has hitherto observed the poet lying beside the stream about to drink from inappropriate waters. But Apollo’s action also reflects the behavior of the dreamer (Propertius) himself, who here engages in the very same act of observation as he watches himself perform in the dream. Apollo’s spying adds another shade of meaning to *visus eram* in line 1: the poet did not merely *seem* or *appear* on Mount Helicon about to sing Ennian themes, but he was (literally) *seen* by Apollo. These parallels establish a kind of interchangeability between the poet and the god whose ramifications will be explored further below.

But before Apollo intervenes, the narrator states that he was poised to drink from a spring: “parvaeque tam magnis admoram fontibus ora” (“I had moved my small mouth to the powerfully gushing spring,” line 5). This reference to drinking from the Hippocrene, the spring on Mount Helicon that sprang forth when the winged horse Pegasus struck the side of the mountain with his hoof, is a metaphor for receiving inspiration to write epic poetry. The Hippocrene’s importance for epic poetry is revealed by the subsequent, parenthetical list of historical subjects

from Ennius's *Annales*. It is only at this point in the poem's narrative that the reader realizes that the narrator is not inactive, but has been frozen in a reclining position, ready to imbibe the inspiration suited for poets such as Ennius. Propertius's initial appearance in the dream had been merely static, as though he were part of a tableau—the verbs *visus eram*, *recubans*, and *hiscere posse* suggest his *potential* for action, and the pluperfect *admoram* in line 5 indicates that he had moved his mouth *to* the stream, but had not yet tasted its water. He is arrested by Apollo's reproach before he can take further action; this is indicated by the temporal relationship between *admoram* in line 5 and the *cum* clause in line 13 that introduces Apollo, although main verb and subordinate clause are separated across the catalogue of Ennian themes. From this point on, the poet assumes the position of listener and observer.¹⁵

Propertius Demens

In the first line of his admonition to the poet, Apollo addresses him as *demens* (“mad [man],” line 15), thus characterizing his behavior up to this point as mad or foolish. Apollo deems the poet's behavior *demens* in light of what he is about to tell him: namely, that his talents are better suited for love poetry, from which he (literally his page, *pagina*) has wandered: “cur tua praescriptos evecta est pagina gyros” (line 21). The term *demens* recalls the language of Tibullus 1.5, where it refers to Tibullus's creation of an unrealizable fantasy: “at mihi felicem vitam, si salva fuisses, / fingebam demens, et renuente deo” (lines 19–20). Propertius uses *demens* to refer to a different type of temporary “madness.” In its current context the word is a counterpart to the narrator's use of *visus eram* in the poem's opening line, for both terms refer to the appearance of something in a dream that contradicts what is expected in reality: the poet's appearance atop Mount Helicon is as unlikely as his decision to sing epic verse. By using the adjective *demens* to address the poet, Apollo implicitly equates the poet reclining and about to sing epic verse with a dreamer engaging in some irrational activity within his dream. In fact, by using *demens* within the context of the dream, Apollo seems to imply with a meta-oneiric wink that the poet's epic pretensions are not only poorly chosen, but have a delusional quality.

Within the account of Ennius's themes, as in dreams, there are elements of distortion. First, there is a disconnection between Propertius's desire to sing of the deeds of Alba's kings, as he states in line 3, and the fact that Ennius did not actually include these in his *Annales*, beginning as he did instead with Romulus, who in his account is the grandson of Aeneas, after the rape of Aeneas's daughter, Ilia, by the god Mars.¹⁶ Reflecting this discrepancy, what Propertius conjures of

Ennius's themes are not the deeds of Alban kings, but those of heroes of Rome's Republic. Furthermore, as G. P. Goold points out, in Propertius's catalogue in line 8, "*regiaque Aemilia vecta tropaea rate*" ("and royal trophies transported upon Aemilius's ship"), he seems to have conflated the victory of Aemilius Regillus from *Annales* 14 "with the triumphal return of L. Aemilius Paullus up the Tiber in 167, by which time Ennius was dead."¹⁷

Apollo Appears

Following the catalogue of Ennian themes, Apollo spies Propertius from the Castalian wood ("*Castalia . . . ex arbore*," line 13). Goold is quick to mention the geographical impossibility of this, for "Castalia is on Parnassus in Phocis, while the poet's dream takes place on Helicon in Boeotia."¹⁸ It seems that Propertius has conflated the two favorite haunts of Apollo. The awkward inaccuracy of the phrase *Castalia ex arbore* in line 13 jolts the astute reader and at the same time underscores the sudden shift from the narrator's reverie to the appearance of Apollo, a move that signals that they have changed places as the foci of the scene. This exchange of stances between poet and god underscores the relative similarity between the two figures within the context of the dream as they alternate between action and observation, viewing and being viewed. Their mirroring continues as the poet assumes the role of observer from the god.

Apollo's delayed appearance functions much like a traditional epiphany, albeit the second one in the dream. The god is introduced in a static pose, much like a statue: the description "*aurata . . . nixus ad antra lyra*" ("leaning on his golden lyre beside the cave," line 14) conflates the dream image of Apollo with a sculpted representation of his form. In fact, his pose evokes that of a statue type documented in extant works of art.¹⁹ Figure 13 represents a type popular in the Roman period, which shows Apollo leaning on his lyre, rather than playing it, with one arm above his head indicating rest. Known as the Cyrene type, it is found in relief sculpture and in the round. Propertius's evocation of a visual image in his description of Apollo is important for an exploration of the similarity between plastic and oneiric images of the gods.²⁰ But Propertius's dreamed Apollo is not a static image; rather, this image quickly becomes animated with voice (his speech in lines 15 through 24) and movement, as indicated by the verb *monstrat* in line 25. By envisioning Apollo as an animated sculpture, the poet goes beyond simply conjuring for his reader a familiar image; rather, he draws attention to the paradox inherent in the idea that a sculpted form could convey life. The success of this illusion hinges upon the viewer's (and dreamer's) engagement with the static sculpture, where he imagines the god and his attributes to imbue the inanimate form.



Figure 13. Cyrene, Libya, Temple of Apollo, colossal marble statue of Apollo. Second century CE. British Museum, London. (Photo © The Trustees of the British Museum)

One context where the image of a god might be conflated with the god himself was in the temple, where the cult statue was venerated as though it were the god. Sleeping in the temple of a healing god such as Asclepius to receive a message or direct assistance from the deity, a practice known as incubation, was common in antiquity and often took place in the presence of statues depicting the god.²¹ The second-century CE writer Artemidorus in his *Oneirocritica* writes specifically about the appearance of gods' statues in dreams, claiming twice that such statues in dreams had the same meaning as the gods themselves.²² Presumably the perception that a god appeared in a dream was heightened during incubation and facilitated by the presence of cult statues in the room where the incubator slept. Although he has been transported there unwittingly, Propertius reclining in the shade of Helicon, a space sacred to Apollo, is similar to an incubator in a temple. While a dreamer wishing for a message might imagine the statue of a god to be transformed

into the god himself in a dream, Propertius imagines the god in his dream as a statue.

Propertius also explores the paradox of the animate sculpture in poem 2.31, where he describes his contrasting responses to two statues of Apollo. Poem 2.31 presents an ekphrasis of the sculptural program on the portico of the Temple of Apollo on the Palatine, the temple itself, and the friezes and statues that make up the decorative program within the temple. Propertius not only describes the individual elements of the program but comments specifically on his experience as a viewer looking at these works of art.²³ What impresses the viewer is the illusionism of the sculpted works: that is, their ability to defy the medium in which their subject is represented in order to achieve their effect. Before mentioning the individual sculptures, the poet describes the setting of the portico as designed for the visitor to walk through and organized by alternating columns and statues: “tantam erat in speciem Poenis digesta columnis, / inter quas Danaï femina turba senis” (“The portico had been arranged for so great an appearance with Punic columns, between which stood the daughters of old Danaus,” lines 3–4). Propertius envisions the complex as a space that not only invites but is specifically set up for visual engagement by the viewer, both as a unified whole and at the level of individual works.

Within the poem’s first sixteen lines, the poet encounters two statues of Apollo and describes both in terms of their ability to shift between stasis and animation. The first one that he describes is also the first individual sculpture he observes. The viewer makes the following observation: “†hic equidem Phoebos† visus mihi pulchrior ipso / marmoreus tacita carmen hiare lyra” (“Here a marble Apollo, seeming to me more beautiful than the god himself, appeared to mouth a song on a silent lyre,” lines 5–6). The viewer conveys his perspective by commenting on his impression that the sculpture goes beyond imitation to achieve an appearance that—by appearing more beautiful than the actual god—is *more* like Apollo than the god himself. The phrase *visus mihi* specifically highlights the viewer’s perspective on the sculpture.²⁴ Thus the narrator privileges the viewer’s reaction to what he sees in featuring his act of viewing. The line should also remind us of the language used to introduce the dream in poem 3.3. As W. A. Camps observes in his commentary on this line, “Here *visus* must be doing double duty, indicating both that the statue was seen by the poet, and that it ‘seemed to be’ (i.e., represented) Apollo singing to his lyre.”²⁵ In the poet’s dream narration, too, *visus eram* refers both to the poet’s apparent behavior in the dream and the fact that he is spied by Apollo (and himself as dreamer).

The reader knows, however, that the viewer does not actually think he is looking at the god himself because the viewer is aware of the material from which

the image has been constructed (*marmoreus*), a paradox that is underscored by the notion that the god seemed to play a song on a lyre that was silent (another reference to the marble's lifelessness). It is worth noting that the phrase *carmen hiare*, used to express the god's action in line 6, is echoed in the phrase *hiscere nervis meis* from the poet's description of himself poised to sing Ennian themes in line 4 of poem 3.3. The verb *hiare* and its inchoative form *hiscere* in both contexts seem to imply the suggestion of song without the realization of it. In the case of the Apollo statue, we might imagine that he "mouths" a song, since he is prohibited by his material from actually singing, while Propertius in the dream makes a move to sing but is frozen in place like a statue when the dreamed Apollo interrupts him. The viewer's reaction to this work of visual art exemplifies both the success of the sculpture's illusionism—that is, its ability to seem real beyond the boundaries of representation in a static form—and awareness of the parameters of this illusionism. Thus the viewer exhibits a certain self-consciousness about his experience as a viewer.

This self-consciousness is also on display in the viewer's subsequent observation. Describing the next group, the herd of cattle by the sculptor Myron, the narrator exclaims that these are "alive" (*vivida signa*, line 8).²⁶ Again, the author accompanies a description of what the viewer sees with the viewer's interpretation of what he sees, via the effect it has upon him. As if to emphasize the remarkable power of a work of art in achieving this, *vivida* is juxtaposed with the genitive *artificis* (a reference to the artist Myron), tempting the reader to understand that the viewer's experience is explicitly linked with the artist's skill at making the artificial seem real.²⁷

The ekphrasis ends with the viewer's observation of a second statue of Apollo in lines 15 and 16. This time the god appears between his mother and sister, a position mimicked in the structure of line 15: "deinde inter matrem deus ipse interque sororem / Pythius in longa carmina veste sonat" ("Then the Pythian god himself, between his mother and sister, in a long garment plays songs," lines 15–16). In contrast to the account of the first Apollo statue, this second description lacks explicit reference to the act of viewing; rather, the viewer's impression of the statue is conveyed through the action of the sculpted figure itself. In fact, there is no reference to this Apollo as a statue at all. Instead of communicating his impression that the illusionistic power of the object defies the limits of its medium, Propertius allows the act of defiance to speak for itself. Andrew Laird writes, "The poem [2.31] confuses us from the outset by consistently blurring the difference between objects and representations of objects."²⁸ Contributing to this blurring is the variation in the observer's descriptions of the sculptures.

In his reaction to the exterior statue, the narrator reveals his awareness of the mechanism at work for making the image seem lifelike. This is similar to the perspective of someone who has awoken from a dream and reflects upon his mistaken impression that what he has just seen and experienced in the dream actually happened. One is capable of this awareness only from the perspective of waking retrospection. Reacting to the cult statue of Apollo, the viewer is like a dreamer immersed in his dream; the illusion of the sound that the cult statue makes (*sonat*) is also parallel with his dreamlike state. Looking back upon the experience as he writes his poem, the poet conveys the remarkable experience of looking at the Apollo statues from the detached perspective of a viewer able to appreciate the deceptive mechanism at work. For the dreamer, the mechanism that creates the illusion is the state of sleep; for the viewer, it is the artist's skill.

The contrast between the external and internal images of the god manifests itself in the transformation of his silent lyre ("tacita carmen hiare lyra," line 6) to his production of song ("in longa carmina veste sonat," line 16) in the respective images. This contrast parallels the change in the external sculpture's appearance of reality ("†hic equidem Phoebos† visus mihi pulchrior ipso / marmoreus," lines 5–6) to the internal sculpture's embodiment of reality ("deinde inter matrem deus ipse interque sororem / Pythius," lines 15–16).²⁹ This transformation from statue to the appearance of the god himself is echoed in poem 3.3, where the god is first seen leaning on his lyre rather than playing it. Furthermore, the god's *tacita lyra* in 2.31.6 is recalled by his *aurata lyra* in 3.3.14, where explicit reference to the lyre's material (*aurata*) corresponds to the implicit reference to the material (*marmoreus*) that renders the god's lyre silent in 2.31. The statue-like god of 3.3 becomes animated with his verbal address to the poet, just as Apollo in 2.31 came to embody his statue and sing audibly with the change from *tacita* to *sonat*. As the viewer's movement into the temple in 2.31 marks a transition from representation to real, we see a similar shift when the narrator of 3.3 changes his emphasis from Apollo's prop (*aurata lyra*), posture (*nixus*), and position (*ad antra*) to his speech and eventual movement (*dixerat, monstrat*).

Like his description of his visual encounter with public statues of Apollo on the Palatine, Propertius's description of his private dream encounter with Apollo brings the god to life. In both dream and sculpture, the gods are made visible to mortals; beyond this, they appear animated and even interact with mortals, transcending the usual boundaries, whether material or spatial, that prohibit interaction. Whether Propertius had the actual sculptures from the temple complex on the Palatine in mind while composing poem 2.31 is unknowable. The same is true for poem 3.3. While the poet may have been inspired by the actual sight of

sculptures, at the Palatine Temple of Apollo or elsewhere, when he wrote poem 3.3, what he recalls in this poem is the experience of *viewing* sculptures of the god, which has a close parallel in his description of this experience in poem 2.31. Thus the possible reference in either poem to actual sculptures of Apollo becomes less significant than the connection the poet makes between the viewer's experience in the context of an ekphrasis and in the context of a dream.

Apollo's first physical movement (*monstrat*) in our poem is also his last, as the god disappears from the narrative at this point. But before departing, Apollo points the poet in the direction of the source of inspiration appropriate for elegiac poets: water from the grove of the Muses from which Philetas of Cos drank. Apollo shakes Propertius from his reverie and, in the outer dream, teaches him about the function of his writing in the waking world—namely, that it will serve the girl who sits idly on a bench waiting for her lover (“ut tuus in scamno iactetur saepe libellus / quem legat exspectans sola puella virum,” lines 19–20). Following his admonition regarding the course Propertius should set for his “little raft” (*cumba*, line 22), Apollo shows his charge a new path, and the poem's visual focus shifts dramatically. The mad imaginings of the poet's errant foray into the themes of epic poetry are banished by the sight of the Muses' grotto, which appears to the poet (and the reader) like a work of art before which he stands as an observer. This transition from speech to visual description reflects the important transition between literary genres at this point in the poem. As the poem shifts from epic to elegy, ekphrasis of epic themes gives way to ekphrasis of place, and the catalogue of historical topics already sung cedes to themes appropriate for Romans alive in the present.

It is important to note that Apollo abruptly commands Propertius to redirect his attention rather than move forward: “dixerat, et plectro sedem mihi monstrat eburno / quo nova muscoso semita facta solo est” (“After he spoke, he showed me with his ivory pick a place where a new path had been made in the mossy ground,” lines 25–26). This stands in contrast to the movement otherwise suggested by the image of the *cumba* sailing the ocean while skimming close to the shore (“alter remus aquas alter tibi radat harenas,” line 23). Responding to the god's command, Propertius seems only to shift his gaze from the image of the Hippocrene to that of the grotto, as the poem transports the dreamer (and the reader) from one scene to the next visually rather than physically. We must imagine, I suppose, that Propertius actually follows the path indicated by the god to arrive at the Muses' grotto. But I believe it is significant that the poet does not explicitly mention this movement. For Propertius is as concerned, as we shall see, with the experience of *viewing* the grotto as he is with conveying the experience of *being in* the grotto.

Natura and Ars:
Caves and Statues in Art and Text

As I have suggested above, the focus on the landscape in poem 3.3 serves to distinguish it from others of its genre by shifting emphasis from the rites of initiation (consisting of the *recusatio*, admonition by the god, and the redirection of the poet's focus) to the setting where the initiation occurs. The second half of the poem, set in the Muses' grotto, provides the most visual detail for the dream's setting. Lines 27–32 offer the reader a detailed description of the grotto's decoration before turning to its inhabitants (lines 33–38) and the speech of Calliope (lines 39–50). Considering these lines as a counterpart to the description of the static scene of the poet and the statuesque Apollo at the Hippocrene, we could say that the poem has the quality of a painted diptych showing two landscape scenes (the Hippocrene and the Muses' grotto), whose contiguity is interrupted only by the speeches of Apollo and Calliope.³⁰ Although the reader may wish to imagine these features of the topography at some distance from each other, the abruptness of the transition between them suggests their juxtaposition within the dreamscape.

Envisioning the Muses' Grotto

The poet begins his description of the Muses' grotto (*spelunca*, line 27) with a reference to its decoration.³¹ We might have expected the appearance of a simple, natural cave, given that the setting of Helicon has thus far been characterized by its natural features: its shade (*molli Heliconis umbra*, line 1), the ancient Hippocrene (*Bellerophontei umor equi*, line 2), and its mossy floor (*muscoso solo*, line 26). Furthermore, Propertius had used *antrum*, the term for a natural cave, to describe the place from which Apollo addressed him ("sic ait aurata nixus ad antra lyra," line 14).³² But the first impression the poet conveys is that the cave's natural setting has been enhanced by mosaic work (*affixis lapillis*, line 27), and that drums hang from the grotto's natural pumice (line 28). The next line offers the first hint that the dreamer is looking at the home of the Muses, as the drums are called *orgia Musarum* (line 29). At this point the dreamer and the reader have moved—with their eyes, at least—along the new path (the *nova semita* of line 26) and into the entrance of the grotto.

Many critics of poem 3.3 have observed that the poet's description of the Muses' abode is likely inspired by the decorations of nymphaea and grottoes that were popular among Rome's upper classes.³³ Hubbard downplays the significance of this evocation, commenting that "probably it all seems more strange and wonderful to us than to a Roman, who saw many such things in the gardens of

civilized villas and townhouses.”³⁴ Henri Lavagne cites the poet’s use of *lapillis* in line 27 as a reference to a mosaic style that would have been used in the grottoes with which the poet would have been familiar. Specifically, as Lavagne demonstrates, the word refers to the small stones or pebbles affixed to the surface of a natural cave to mimic its natural appearance, rather than the semiprecious stones or mosaic tesserae for which others had argued.³⁵ No one, however, addresses the incongruity of these man-made elements in the midst of the landscape of Mount Helicon, a feature that, as I have argued, intensifies the dreamer’s visual experience in the dream. Furthermore, if, as these comments suggest, Propertius is alluding to artificial grottoes created to decorate the gardens of contemporary Roman villas, he would certainly have had in mind the contrast they embodied: their use of artificial elements to create a false naturalism. Rather than use elements familiar from his surroundings to make the setting of Helicon seem less strange to his readers, I would argue that he deploys them to create a scene that promotes visual disorientation and uncertainty precisely because of its relocation to the dreamscape, a realm that is already removed from the objects and places of his waking reality. As I will show, the mingling of artificial and natural elements in these spaces has particular relevance for appreciating the oneiric qualities of the scene.

Certainly caves played an important role in the ancient imagination as places associated with nature, the gods, and poetic inspiration.³⁶ Among Propertius’s fellow Augustan poets alone, the cave is associated with inspiration in three notable instances. In Vergil’s *Eclogue* 6, Silenus sings of Gallus’s inspiration *in antro* (line 13), within a poem about Vergil’s own inspiration to create pastoral poetry. In *Odes* 3.25, Horace is transported to a cave associated with Bacchus to renew his inspiration (*specus*, line 2; *antris*, line 4). In Ovid’s *Amores* 3.1, the poet encounters personifications of elegy and tragedy in a grove containing a rocky cave: “spelunca . . . pumice pendens” (line 3). Embellished or man-made grottoes such as we see on a grand scale at Tiberius’s villa at Sperlonga a generation later were also popular in the gardens of the wealthy in Augustan Rome and were likely on view in places such as the gardens of Maecenas on the Esquiline.³⁷ These were spaces (either entirely artificial or built from natural caves) enhanced with artificial elements such as dining couches, mosaics, fountains, and sculptural programs meant to evoke the pure rusticity and numinous quality of the natural cave. Thus the self-conscious mingling of *ars* and *natura* was the hallmark of display in these settings.

Propertius himself articulates the difference between *natura* and *ars*, mapping it onto a distinction between the material wealth of a rich man and the creative wealth of a poet in the poems that precede poem 3.3 and form part of the tripartite introduction to book 3. In poem 3.1, he invokes the spirits of his predecessors Philitas and Callimachus as he wishes for initiation in their sacred grove. He

imagines them spinning the threads of their song together in a cave: “dicite, quo pariter carmen tenuastis in antro” (line 5). There is nothing to suggest that this is anything but an unadorned, natural cave in a setting conducive to poetic inspiration. The connection between the Muses and the natural cave is developed in the following poem, where Propertius distinguishes man-made grottoes (*operosa antra*, 3.2.14), associated with material wealth, from the “wealth” of his poems, specifically characterized as a friendship with the Muses that inspires his poetry (“at Musae comites [mihi] et carmina cara legenti,” 3.2.15). Even though he makes no reference to the Muses’ cave in poem 3.2, the contrast between the artificial setting of the wealthy man and the natural setting of the Muses is obvious from the contrast implied by the juxtaposition of lines 14 and 15. Their opposition is made stronger by the repetition of the word *antrum* from the previous poem. This distinction between the *antra* of the Muses and the *operosa antra* of men from these poems looks ahead to the *spelunca* of line 27 as a space that mingles natural and artificial elements.³⁸

A cave like that of the Muses in poem 3.3 draws attention to its mixing of natural and artificial elements through the addition of stones (*lapillis*, line 27) to the cave’s natural rock (*pumicibus*, line 28), which, as Lavagne has shown, was a well-known decorative technique. The union of these materials is emphasized by Propertius’s use of the verb *affigere*, a technical term for applying stones in the style of a mosaic, to describe their bond.³⁹ The joining of the stones to the pumice is replicated in the placement of the words *lapillis* and *pumicibus* at the ends of their respective consecutive lines. Another way to mingle *ars* and *natura* was through allusion to the inhabitants of such caves, like Polyphemus, the cave-dweller famous from Homer’s *Odyssey*, whose image, in either sculpture or mosaic, adorned several grottoes from the imperial period.⁴⁰ The sculptural program of Tiberius’s grotto at Sperlonga is the most recognizable of these. By replicating the rustic, wild, and dangerous Cyclops in marble form in the grotto, the artist of Sperlonga both alludes to the natural origins of the cave and nods to his taming of the space with elements of artifice. For guests dining in the Sperlonga grotto, the visual experience created by the interplay of natural and artificial elements would undoubtedly have been appealing.⁴¹ The illusionistic presence of the cave’s mythic inhabitants would have created a disorienting sense of being in a familiar and an unfamiliar setting at the same time.

This deliberate play with the overlap between *ars* and *natura*, fantasy and reality, by way of sculpture is also an important feature of the Muses’ grotto in poem 3.3. As if adjusting to the grotto’s darkness, the dreamer begins to focus upon the details of the Muses’ home in lines 29–30. He observes two objects: “Sileni patris imago / fictilis et calami, Pan Tegeae, tui” (“a clay image of Father Silenus, and your reed

pipes, Tegean Pan [hung down]"). It is particularly striking that in the middle of this dream image of a luxurious grotto hangs a clay image of Silenus: this space, itself a type of still life to the viewer's eye, contains its own work of art. Propertius's use of the word *imago* in the description of this constructed landscape is surely meant to underscore the artificiality of the dream's internal setting (the Muses' grotto on Helicon), but it may also suggest the artificiality of the external setting, the dream itself. The Muses' grotto is a place where refined art objects have a home in a setting where nature is enhanced by artifice; this juxtaposition of natural and artificial may also remind the reader of the interplay between real and represented in the dream image that provides the larger context for the appearance of the grotto in the natural setting of Helicon.

This possibility is encouraged if we consider the scene's relationship with its predecessor in Vergil's sixth *Eclogue*, which also tells a story of poetic initiation and is set in a cave. *Eclogue* 6 is divided, like Propertius 3.3, into two parts. In the first part (lines 1–12), the narrator, Tityrus, encounters Apollo, who encourages him to avoid epic poetry and to "recite thin song" ("oportet . . . deductum dicere carmen," line 5) by composing pastoral verse. The second part is set in a cave. At line 13 the scene switches with the entrance of the shepherds Chromis and Mnasyllus, who come upon Silenus sleeping in a cave (lines 13–14) and quickly bind him so that he cannot elude their grasp yet again (lines 18–19). The shepherds persuade Silenus to sing a lengthy song, whose themes make up most of the rest of the poem. The theme of poetic inspiration is revisited at the end, when Silenus compares the inspiration of the Augustan poet Gallus to that of the archaic Greek poet Hesiod atop Mount Helicon (lines 64–73).

Vergil's Silenus is the real Silenus, animated and vocal when roused from sleep by the visiting poets—although he initially appears like a statue to his visitors, who engage with him, at first, as viewers. Vergil describes the scene: "Chromis et Mnasyllus in antro / Silenum pueri somno videre iacentem / inflatum hesterno venas, ut semper, Iaccho" ("The boys Chromis and Mnasyllus saw Silenus lying asleep in the cave, his veins bloated, as usual, by yesterday's wine," lines 14–16). When awakened, his speech reveals his animation. By contrast, Propertius's Silenus is only a representation of the god; his image is a reference to the cave as his natural environment, while symbolizing the melding of nature and artifice within the grotto. Vergil takes time to describe Silenus's static state, which is consonant with the appearance of a sculpted figure, as he is held captive by the gazes of the poets in search of inspiration who come upon him. Once he is roused from sleep, he proceeds to sing and recalls the passing of the pipes of Hesiod (*Ascraeo seni*, line 70) to the poet Gallus. Propertius recalls Hesiod's pipes when he refers to the pipes of Tegean Pan on view beside the *imago Sileni* in poem 3.3.

Through its incongruous relationship with its setting, the sculpted Silenus is a reminder to its viewers of the intrusion of *ars* into the realm of *natura*, however fabricated this latter realm might be. With regard to Vergil's Silenus in *Eclogue* 6, Charles Segal writes, "He is not merely a participant in nature's life. He also stands apart from nature and exerts a creative power over it, as the next lines (27–28) show. We have here a dichotomy particularly suggestive for the nature of poetry, but relevant equally to the nature of man."⁴² Thus even the "real" Silenus embodies both natural forces and the creative forces that tame nature. This incongruity is explored further in the image that follows.

After his description of the grotto's entrance and the image of Silenus, Propertius observes Venus's doves drinking from the pool whose waters will anoint him at the dream's end: "et Veneris dominae volucres, mea turba, columbae / tingunt Gorgoneo punica rostra lacu" ("and the winged doves of Mistress Venus, my crowd, dip their purple beaks in the Gorgon's pool," lines 31–32).⁴³ The doves' drinking from the pool is a prelude to Propertius's drinking from the same water, and thus it is an important visual indicator of his own initiation, as signaled by the poet's use of *mea turba* to describe the doves in line 31. The noun *turba* also recalls line 24, where it was used by contrast to signify the stormy passageways of mid-ocean thronged by epic poets ("medio maxima turba mari est"). The addition of *mea* inserts subjectivity into the dream narrative, as the phrase *mea turba* marks an intersection between the dream's narrative and the external frame for its retelling by calling to mind the doves' symbolic association with Venus and thus with love, the occupation of Propertius's previous and future work.

The image of the doves "belongs to art," as Hubbard writes, "but is no less dreamlike for that."⁴⁴ Indeed, I would argue that the image is *more* familiar as a dream precisely because it extends the image of the grotto as an invasion of refinement into the rustic realm and thus reminds the reader of the effects of Propertius's use of references to visual art, not only to suggest a visual parallel for his description, but to highlight the viewing experience in his dream. As Hubbard and others have noted, the celebrated mosaic depicting birds drinking from a basin of water, found at Hadrian's Villa at Tivoli (fig. 14), shares iconographic features with Propertius's description.⁴⁵ But beyond the shared subject matter, the Tivoli mosaic has been fashioned in such high-quality *opus vermiculatum* that the water seems to shimmer in the basin, creating an illusionistic image quite worthy of a dream.⁴⁶

It is not by chance that this image, the first mention of any living creature within the Muses' abode and undoubtedly recognizable from artistic representations, strikes us as ironic. The bold purple color of the doves' beaks adds to the pictorial quality of the scene, while the transitive verb *tingunt* reminds us that the



Figure 14. Tivoli, Hadrian's Villa, mosaic showing doves drinking from a basin. Second century CE. Musei Capitolini, Rome. (Photo © Scala / Art Resource, NY)

doves are in motion as their color flashes through the water. Although they are living birds in the context of the dream (as opposed to Silenus, who is made of clay), the poet describes them with language that evokes a scene from visual art. By referring to their movement, he reminds the reader that they are alive while calling to mind the very mechanism at work in the mosaic image that indicates its ability to *imitate* life and motion. This use of the doves as emblems of the poet's subject matter draws attention to the highly self-reflexive nature of his technique of evoking the visual arts. Beyond simply conjuring up imagery from artistic representation to symbolize his poetic material, Propertius calls attention to the visual effects of this imagery to remind his readers of the dynamics at work in his poem: the dream brings to life the doves, whose animation is suggested by the illusionistic techniques used by artists. There is nothing artificial about birds drinking from a pool in the natural setting of Helicon, but by evoking a visual representation of birds drinking from a pool with this image, Propertius hints at

its incongruity in the natural setting, and thus the scene becomes another reminder of the juxtaposition of real and represented figures within the dreamscape.

This tension between art and life is reinforced when Propertius sees the inhabitants of the grotto. He notices the Muses busy at work and comments on their activity in detail: “haec hederas legit in thyrsos, haec carmina nervis / aptat, at illa manu textit utraque rosam” (“this one plucks ivy for a thyrsus, this one fits songs to the lyre, while that one weaves roses together with both hands,” lines 36–37). This may remind us of the depiction of the Muses in works of visual art, where each one represents her domain either with a prop or with her pose.⁴⁷ Fittingly, each of Propertius’s Muses is engaged in an activity that involves composition of some sort, and at least the first two seem connected to the trappings of tragic and lyric poetry, respectively. But it is also possible to connect these activities more generally to the work of any poet. The verb *texo* (“weave”) carries the secondary meaning “write,” while *apto* and *lego* could be read metaphorically as references to aspects of the poet’s craft.⁴⁸ Thus the Muses are observed busy at a poet’s work—the very labor that should occupy Propertius when he is roused from his dream.⁴⁹

When one of the Muses addresses her guest, Propertius identifies her as Calliope: “ut reor a facie, Calliopea fuit” (“from her appearance, I think it was Calliope,” line 38). In his commentary, Lawrence Richardson Jr. points out that this is a pun on the etymology of her name, which means “of beautiful voice” in Greek but is misinterpreted by Propertius to refer to her “beautiful face.”⁵⁰ Perhaps this is simply an instance of Propertius’s fixation on female beauty, but I think that it reflects more upon his desire to foreground the visual quality of the dreamer’s experience in the dream and to remind the reader of the function of looking in this dream narrative. Furthermore, the use of the phrase *ut reor* in this parenthetical statement, the only example of this verb in its finite form in the poems of Propertius, reminds the reader that the dreamer is reporting this observation after the experience and is commenting upon what he has seen. But this comment also reveals that the narrator (and the poet) is recalling an image he has seen of Calliope in another context, such as the area near the Portico of Octavia that boasted sculptures of the nine Muses.⁵¹ If the dreamer is using a reference point from contemporary works of visual art to navigate the unfamiliar realm of the dream, it is the recognition that comes from the act of viewing that triggers this connection. The dreamer’s ability, as a viewer, to recognize Calliope through the visual codes of representation in sculpture enables him, as a dreamer, to identify her in the world of the dream.

By glimpsing Calliope and her sisters in action, the narrator recalls the Muses’ sculpted referents from his visual memory, thus acknowledging the dream as a place for animating sculpture, as with Apollo in the first half of the poem. But

unlike her counterpart Apollo, Calliope breaks the boundary between viewer and viewed image by reaching across the visual plane and touching the dreamer: “e quarum numero me contigit una dearum” (line 37). She, like her sisters, is also “putting her hands to her duty” (cf. lines 33–34, “diversaeque novem sortitae iura Puellae / exercent teneras in sua dona manus”), thus making him a poetic initiate, or branding him as a kind of “poetic task.” The transition from visual to tactile interaction is significant and jarring enough to the dreamer to move him closer to surfacing from sleep. This movement is underscored by his placement of the parenthetical commentary on his dream directly after this breach. The phrase *ut reor* links the external and internal worlds of the dream by commenting on the one from the perspective of the other; in doing this, it acts as a hinge between two separate acts of viewing: dreaming and looking at sculpture. Finally, with its possible allusion to viewership outside the dream, the comment *ut reor* reminds us of the multiple layers of self-reflexivity within the poem: the poet dreams of himself receiving inspiration for the poetry he will write upon waking, and, as he retells this experience, uses evocation of the visual arts to draw attention to the *ars* at work in his poem.

Calliope’s speech from the grotto in lines 39–50 recalls Apollo’s speech to the poet at the Hippocrene (lines 15–23). The Muse lists topics to be avoided and those to be embraced by the elegiac poet. Lines 47–50 in particular detail the themes appropriate to love elegy and the contemporary audience ready to benefit from his writing. Calliope’s distinction between the white swans (*niveis cynis*, line 39) of elegy and the strong horse (*fortis equi*, line 40) of epic reiterates Apollo’s contrast between the small wheels and small ship of Propertius’s poetry (*parvis rotis*, line 18; *cumba*, line 22) and the large storms of epic that threaten the deep sea (*maxima turba*, line 24). At the poem’s end, Calliope moistens the poet’s mouth with water from the spring from which Philitas (rather than Ennius) drank: “taliam Calliope, lymphisque a fonte petitis / ora Philitea nostra rigavit aqua,” lines 51–52). Thus once again the Muse breaches the boundary of the visual plane by touching the dreamer, and it is presumably right after this point that the poet surfaces from his dream. Just as Calliope began her speech with an extension across the visual plane to touch the dreamer (line 37) after the ekphrasis of the grotto, so too at line 52, after a lengthy descriptive passage, she switches from verbal to physical interaction. In both instances, physical interaction between dreamer and dreamed image brings the dreamer (and the reader) closer to waking by forcing him to confront the boundaries between the vivid realism of the dream’s images and an awareness of the deceptive power of these very images. This simultaneous awareness of and beguilement by the illusionism of a visual image is familiar from Propertius’s commentary on the statuary adorning the

Temple of Apollo on the Palatine in poem 2.31. It is also a hallmark of the viewer's experience when confronted with the well-known illusionistic painted images that covered the walls of a small room in a villa at Boscoreale, to which I now turn.⁵²

In arguing for the model of the three-dimensional grotto or nymphaeum from a late Republican luxury garden as the reference for Propertius's *spelunca*, Lavagne challenged Boucher's assertion that there was a pictorial model, specifically a painting, for the poem's image.⁵³ Although it is unnecessary to posit a lost painting of the scene on Mount Helicon as the poet's model, I believe that there is reasonable scope for considering painting in our discussion. While caves and grottoes were no doubt popular on the grounds of villas, extant painted representations indicate that these features were also popular in the wall painting of Propertius's day.⁵⁴ I would further contend that wall paintings offering three-dimensional vistas can (and do) provide a useful parallel for thinking about the illusion of space common to dreams and thus can offer us insight into the visual dynamics of poem 3.3.

A Painted Dreamscape

Propertius's particular version of this initiation scene fully exploits the potential of the dream as a vehicle for conveying the potency of a visual experience, deliberately and self-consciously acknowledging the similarities between dreaming and looking at works of visual art. I have already suggested some broad similarities between the viewer's experiences in the dreamscape of the poem and in the setting of an artificial grotto, such as those that may have been familiar from his friends' gardens and are evoked on a grand scale by the seaside dining grotto at Tiberius's villa at Sperlonga. I now turn to an extant painted representation of an artificial grotto that shares obvious iconographic and subtle experiential qualities with Propertius's dream. As we shall see, the wall paintings of the small room from the Roman villa at Boscoreale (room M on the plan in fig. 15, shown reconstructed in fig. 16) provide an important point of comparison for the poem because they, like the poem, contain representations of space.

Generally speaking, the style of painting that flourished just before Propertius's lifetime, known as the Second Style, provides a compelling visual parallel and possible model for the disorienting effect of the dream's images and the dreamer's self-conscious reaction to them.⁵⁵ The Second Style is marked most distinctly by a movement away from the First Style's emphasis on the construction and physicality of the wall and toward the complete denial of the wall as a surface for depiction. In her lengthy treatment of the Second Style wall paintings in room M of the villa at Boscoreale, Phyllis Williams Lehmann writes that the style's "most significant tendency" was that "it moved toward a decorative negation of the structural

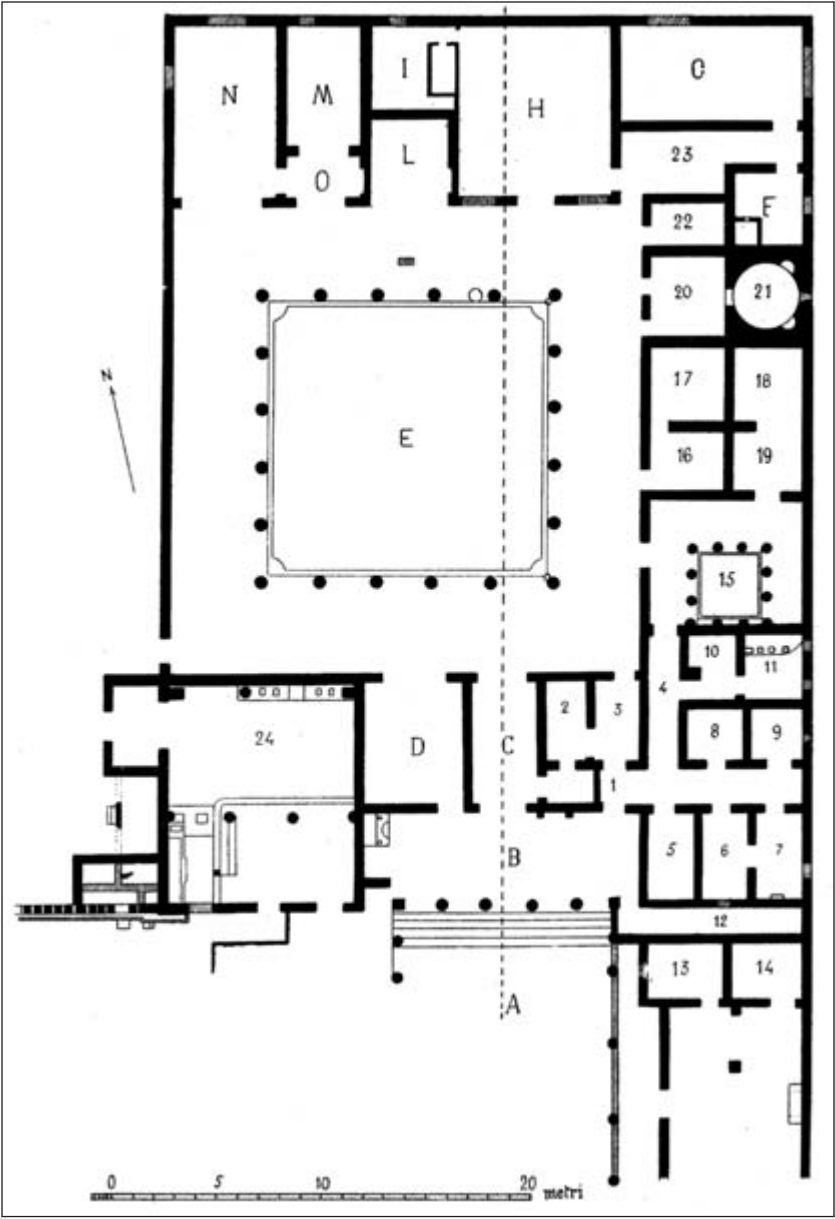


Figure 15. Boscoreale, plan of villa of P. Fannius Synistor. (From Barnabei 1901)



Figure 16. Boscoreale, villa of P. Fannius Synistor, view of room M. 40–30 BCE. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. (Photo © The Metropolitan Museum of Art)

function of the wall which was opened up, or rather painted away.”⁵⁶ Where the Second Style is thought to have reached its height—as in room M at Boscoreale, likely painted between 50 and 40 BCE and now on display in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York—the obliteration of the wall was realized in various ways.⁵⁷ The appearance of multiple layers of depth beyond the plane of the wall and the variety of structural types represented on it foreground the artist’s ability to defy the limitations of a room’s structure in creating successful illusionism.⁵⁸

Room M of the villa at Boscoreale, although perhaps exceptional in its combination of motifs, is paradigmatic for the features of the Second Style, as it demonstrates multiple modes for “painting away” the room’s walls with illusionistic images. As is typical for Second Style depictions of this type, the cubiculum



Figure 17. Boscoreale, villa of P. Fannius Synistor, lateral wall of room M. 40–30 BCE. (Photo © The Metropolitan Museum of Art / Art Resource, NY)

presents mirror images on its side walls.⁵⁹ Entering the room, the viewer would have seen on either side a series of four panels. The first three form a triptych, with two scenes of urban architecture flanking a sacral-idyllic shrine seemingly set back into the wall (fig. 17).⁶⁰ The final panel on each side depicts a tholos set within a colonnaded courtyard.⁶¹ The tranquility offered by this area for strolling appears enticingly close by, as though it lies just behind a low wall and a curtain. In an alcove at the back of the room, where the viewer's gaze would have been directed upon entering, we see a rustic scene of a grotto, trees, a pergola, and a fountain, arranged to accommodate the room's only window.⁶²

While much of the discussion of the scenes from room M has centered on their representation of structures from the “real” world—theatrical sets, the residences of wealthy Hellenistic kings or, conversely, local Italian aristocrats⁶³—I will focus on the grotto panel on the back wall (fig. 18), the view toward which the visitor is directly oriented upon entry, and thus a privileged view.⁶⁴ As Lehmann observes, “Nowhere is its [the Second Style's] conscious juxtaposition and equation of the real and the painted more striking” than in the grotto panel.⁶⁵ This panel also contains the least architectural detail and is, therefore, the least reminiscent of the construction of the room itself. Furthermore, the fact that it boasts a window through which one could have looked out to see the real rustic scene outside the physical building drew greater attention to the very artifice of the images depicted inside, adjacent to the window. The empty space of the cave, with its gaping black hollow, is the largest section of negative space in the room. This creates an inverted parallel to the window beside it, which would have let in light and offered a view



Figure 18. Boscoreale, villa of P. Fannius Synistor, back wall of room M. 40–30 BCE. (Photo © The Metropolitan Museum of Art / Art Resource, NY)

onto the scene outside, thus increasing the sense of depth in the room. Conversely, the cave merely alludes to depth with its hint of a recess beyond what is visible to the viewer; it does not provide a view.

The viewer of this back wall might have been immediately struck by the contrast between the wild vines creeping around the cave and the neatly curled, jewel-encrusted tendrils entwined around the adjacent red column depicted in the foreground, as noted by Bettina Bergmann.⁶⁶ The column, identical to those that serve as borders between the panels on the lateral walls, would recall for the viewer both the views contained on the side panels *and* the function of these columns as dividers between the structure of the room and what appeared to lie beyond it. Given their role in dissolving the walls' integrity while hinting at the room's structural support, it is fitting that these columns are as ornate and fanciful as they are.

When the viewer's eyes focus on the details of the cave, the image of a figure, presumably a god, standing on the cave's floor emerges from the darkness at the foot of the fountain (fig. 19).⁶⁷ Just as the *imago* of Silenus made of clay appeared



Figure 19. Boscoreale, villa of P. Fannius Synistor, back wall of room M, detail of grotto. 40–30 BCE.
(Photo © The Metropolitan Museum of Art / Art Resource, NY)

in the Muses' grotto as a self-referential reminder of the dream's artifice in Propertius 3.3, so too in the painted cave we see this token of artifice, itself part of an artificial representation of a natural setting adjacent to a view of the real outdoors. The bird in the Boscoreale cave shown drinking from the man-made fountain that collects and distributes water from an unseen natural source provides an additional connection between the painting and the poem. Like Propertius's doves, which drink from a refined pool in the Muses' ornate grotto, this bird reminds the viewer of the illusionism of the scene; the presence of a living creature interacting within this scene of represented nature enhances its credibility as an accurate representation of reality. Its proximity to the open window, and the possibility that through the window would have wafted sounds of running water and chirping birds, as Lehmann suggests, would have further blurred the distinction between fantasy and reality.⁶⁸ A glimpse of live birds through the window would, in turn, separate the two sides into fantasy and reality. The cycle of shifts in awareness between represented and real is also typical of the experience of dreaming and waking to describe the dream.

The room is small enough that the viewer, whether standing in the center or reclining at one side, would be able to move his or her gaze from urban scene to sacral-idyllic landscape to rustic grotto, much like the narrator in Propertius 3.3, who seems merely to shift his focus in order to travel from the Hippocrene to the Muses' grotto. There is a certain disjunction between the scenes, although they are balanced structurally by the speeches of Apollo and Calliope and the similar themes of these speeches. Rather than dwell upon the incongruity between the subjects for representation, we can compare the ways in which the paintings of the room call attention to their artifice, just as the imagery of the Muses' dwelling in 3.3 does. As Ann Kuttner has observed, "The owner of the Boscoreale villa seated in his small salon could pass at will, with a flick of the eye, from the jumbled cliffs of a multi-story townscape to portico precinct to villa *hortus* and grotto, each the stage for a different *persona*."⁶⁹ With the "stage" set in this way, the villa owner or guest had only to imagine himself or herself an actor upon it. Within the space of the room, one was free to cast himself or herself in a role that could change depending on the backdrop. In this way the viewer of the room is similar to the dreamer/actor in Propertius 3.3, who swivels from the scene of the Hippocrene to that of the Muses' grotto when directed by Apollo, casting off his persona as writer of epic poetry and taking up the proper role of elegist.

All of the room's represented views are linked by ornately decorated matching columns and pilasters, which also serve to demarcate the individual scenes. The low podium that continues around the room and supports the columns adds some uniformity to the otherwise incongruous scenes that appear to exist beyond this

boundary. These elements contribute to the illusion of depth of space on the walls by making it look as though the vistas themselves are already set back at one remove from the viewer's standpoint. But these features also remind the viewer of the boundaries of his or her visual experience by framing the vistas and thus hinting at the physical barrier between viewer and view.

Likewise, the narrator of a dream creates certain parameters to delineate the experience of the dream. The signpost *visus eram* in line 1 of Propertius 3.3, for example, not only identifies what follows as both a visual experience and a dream but, along with the comments *mea turba* and *ut reor*, in lines 31 and 38, respectively, qualifies it as a description recounted from the perspective of a dreamer aware of the dream's relevance to his waking life. But while the tense of *visus eram* reminds the reader of the narrator's perspective of hindsight, it also serves to dissolve the barrier between dreamer and narrator as viewers by blurring the line between seeing oneself act in a dream and seeing the action of the dream through one's own eyes. The two experiences are now the same. Thus the reader, whose experience parallels that of the narrator and dreamer, is reminded of the mechanism at work at the beginning of the poem, while being encouraged by the vividness of its description to forget its narrative frame (as the dreamer does while the dream is in progress). This dual awareness is similar to that experienced by the viewer of the paintings in an ornate Second Style room, where the graphic scenes of artificial vistas seem to dissolve the walls on whose surfaces they are painted, while certain elements of the composition remind the viewer of this very construct.

In room M's new setting at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the modern viewer is able to appreciate the symmetry of the lateral walls and the function of the back wall as a balance between them from a vantage point at the center of the room, which affords panoramic views. Taken individually, each of the room's vistas provides the illusion of increased space, thus creating an opportunity for the viewer to envision realms beyond the room while remaining firmly planted within its confines. Like a dreamer who is confined physically to his or her bed but in a dream is seemingly able to interact in contexts unbound by the limitations of physical reality, the viewer in this room transcends space.⁷⁰ And just as a dreamer can—on waking—characterize whatever he or she has seen as a dream, and recognize his or her credulity while sleeping, I believe the same would apply to viewers of such a room. They would appreciate the skilled artifice of the room's intricate vistas while allowing themselves to succumb to its intended effects.

Another similarity between the experience of viewing in room M and dreaming derives from the incongruity of the room's images. There is nothing inherently strange about the concurrence of urban and rustic elements in visual representation; in fact, their juxtaposition features in other well-known examples of Second Style

wall painting, such as those in room 11 of the villa at Oplontis. The combination of urban and rustic occurs in literary contexts as well—for example, in a reference by Lucretius to the lifestyle of an affluent Roman, where the two are juxtaposed specifically to emphasize their contrast.⁷¹ In this case, neither of the opposites can satisfy a tormented soul.⁷² Likewise, in the Boscoreale room, city scenes and country scenes coexist in a state of similarly realistic false representation.⁷³ But what does their proximity represent in the wall paintings of a room like this? If, as has been argued, the combination of urban, rustic, and sacral-idyllic landscapes symbolizes the different facets of a villa owner's fantasy of himself, the skill with which their escapist illusionism is executed highlights their owner's cultivation to an equal degree.⁷⁴ Perhaps, then, we can read the panels and their details as symbols of cultivation to which the villa's owner may have wished to draw attention.

This desire would seem to have a counterpart in the motivation of the narrator of 3.3, as he draws attention to the subject matter of his poetry by setting up a contrast between the open space of the gushing water and its bank (*magnis fontibus*, line 5) in the first half of the poem and the cultivated grotto of the Muses, with its smaller water source (*fonte*, line 51), in the second half. The poet-narrator envisions the locus for his inspiration as a place far away from the urban setting in which and about which he will write his poetry. The open space of Helicon and the flow of the Hippocrene are equated with the past through their association with other poets who received inspiration there, and through the epic themes that the location first inspires the narrator to write. By contrast, the artificial naturalism of the Muses' grotto reminds the reader of the refined and urbane subjects that the poet should be treating in his elegies.

The delicate calibration of external views and internal space depicted on the walls of these houses provides a parallel for the tension inherent in relaying the memory of a dream, which lies in the shift between narration and commentary. Just as the Boscoreale room is painted in such a way that its viewer is both taken in by and aware of the illusionistic images that surround him or her, so too does the narrator of Propertius 3.3 draw in the reader with his vivid ekphrases while inviting him or her to reflect upon the dream experience as one who has awoken from it. The shift in planes of perspective is crucial to understanding the complexity of the viewer's experience, both in the dreamscape and in the painted landscape. Additionally, the significance of Propertius's dream images, such as the artificial grotto in the context of a rustic environment, becomes clearer when considered against the painted grotto in the context of the Boscoreale room. These are not merely elements displaced from the reality of a Roman's daily life; rather, they are deployed as symbols of incongruity that make a dream appear more dreamlike and a Second Style wall painting more successful at captivating its viewer. Rereading Propertius's

dream of initiation in light of these visual dynamics reveals that the Propertian version of the tale of poetic initiation is a visual tableau exploiting the setting of the dream to explore the effects of illusionism that are the familiar purview of visual art. Let us keep this in mind as we turn to the Archelaos relief, which boasts the image of a natural cave as the visual focal point around which representations of the Muses, Apollo, and a poet are arrayed.

*The Poet and His Muses
on a Hellenistic Sculpted Relief Panel*

The theme of the Archelaos relief (fig. 20), like that of Propertius 3.3, is poetic inspiration, and particularly the passage of inspiration from the gods via the Muses to the human realm. In fact, the poem and the relief share many iconographic features, such as Apollo with his lyre, the Muses, and their cave amid a landscape that could be Mount Helicon.⁷⁵ Zahra Newby has brought fresh attention to this relief by encouraging the viewer to consider the flow of information from the top down, rather than privileging the bottom register, which has traditionally been the focus of interest because of its seemingly explanatory inscriptions.⁷⁶ In the relief, the nine Muses occupy the second and third of four registers, intermediaries between the realm of Zeus (top register) and that of humans (bottom register). A female figure generally identified as Mnemosyne, mother of the Muses, breaks the barrier between the third and fourth registers and provides a conduit between Zeus and her daughters. Apollo occupies a central place in the central (second) register, where he is depicted standing in a cave and holding a lyre. The omphalos at the god's feet marks this location as his oracular shrine on Mount Parnassus in Delphi. This mingling of symbols representing poetic inspiration and prophecy may remind us of Propertius 3.3, where the dreaming narrator conflates Apollo's inspirational and prophetic haunts, Helicon and Parnassus, respectively.

The first register shows a seated bearded figure (identified by an inscription as Homer) being crowned by the personifications of Chronos (time) and Oikoumene (inhabited world) as personifications of his poems, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, crouch beside his throne. To the right of this ensemble a group of figures, all labeled, seem to pay honor to the seated poet with sacrifice. A number of them represent other genres of literature inspired by Homer's work, while the remaining figures at the far right represent the virtues inculcated by reading it.⁷⁷ The frieze as a whole has been interpreted as a reflection on poetic inspiration, representing the deification of Homer (a recipient of divine inspiration) and his influence upon subsequent poets. The work is often referred to as "The Apotheosis of Homer."⁷⁸



Figure 20. Marble relief showing the apotheosis of Homer, by Archelaos of Priene. Possibly late third century BCE. British Museum, London. (Photo © The Trustees of the British Museum)

Rather than analyzing the implied allegory, I will concentrate on the depiction of poetic inspiration as it pertains to our appreciation of Propertius's poetic account of this process. Material shared by the frieze and the poem includes the figures of Apollo, the Muses, and the poet and the presence of the cave. Also noteworthy are the visual interaction between these figures within the frieze and the external viewer's experience of viewing them.

The second register of the frieze (fig. 21) features Apollo's cave. The god is shown at the front of the cave holding his lyre. The cave's curved structure distinguishes it from its surroundings and thus creates the focal point of the entire frieze for the external viewer. But as the viewer's eyes are drawn to this recessed space, they cannot avoid being distracted by what appears outside the cave, to the viewer's right: a male figure holding a scroll and elevated on a plinth, looming above the other figures in his plane. A tripod carved in low relief towers behind him. His



Figure 21. Marble relief showing the apotheosis of Homer, by Archelaos of Priene, detail of cave and statue. Possibly late third century BCE. British Museum, London. (Photo © The Trustees of the British Museum)

stance atop the plinth marks him as unique among the figures on the frieze and indicates that he is not meant to represent an animated figure but rather a statue. Newby suggests that the statue represents a victorious poet who has claimed the tripod as his prize; perhaps, too, his victory has been commemorated with a statue. It is this figure in particular who embodies the theme of poetic inspiration conveyed by the relief as a whole: as victor in a contest, he has used his divine inspiration to produce verse worthy of a prize bestowed in the human realm.⁷⁹ This point is also conveyed visually, as the poet is the endpoint, or final recipient, of a “web of reflected and reciprocated gazes”⁸⁰ that begins with the exchange between Zeus and Mnemosyne and works its way via the Muses down to the poet. Regardless of the circumstances surrounding the creation of this statue, external to the scene presented on the frieze, the statue *is* the poet as far as the narrative of the frieze is concerned, and his presence as a statue stands in stark contrast to the image of the animated, “real” poet—Homer—in the register below.

Within the context of this frieze, poetic inspiration is articulated through a series of visual connections and discrepancies between the inspiring agent (Apollo) and the recipient of his inspiration (the poet). As Newby notes, the poet-statue’s posture (he is leaning on his left leg and his slightly bent right arm holds a scroll at

mid-thigh) forges a visual connection between him and the figure of Apollo in the cave, whose stance is similar.⁸¹ Yet the fact that the poet is a statue (and therefore the sole inanimate figure among representations of the animated gods) identifies him as different. Furthermore, the fact that the cave's wall overlaps the statue's base draws attention to the poet's marked detachment from his divine counterpart. This separation was possibly reinforced by the poet's position as a voyeur, looking down and around the cave's outer wall toward Apollo and the ninth Muse.

The external viewer, too, is focused on the central image of Apollo in his cave, "reading" the image while riveted in place, like a statue. Although the poet-statue lacks the external viewer's privileged frontal perspective, he does have access to the other register of the frieze. His height allows him to bridge the second and third registers, much like Mnemosyne, who bridges the third and fourth. The two figures are also linked through their similar stances. The poet-statue's gaze connects him to Homer in the first register, if we follow it diagonally downward across the figure of Apollo. Thus the poet-statue becomes an access point not only for what the external viewer looks at on the frieze but also for that viewer's experience of viewing.

Connecting the first and second registers is facilitated by the fact that the poet-statue is related iconographically to the seated figure identified as Homer: their dress is similar, and both hold scrolls in their right hands. The figure of Homer in a sense represents all poets "at work" in the realm of humans, where a poet's divine inspiration has practical application. This seated, kingly Homer is appropriately honored with wreaths and sacrifices and in turn bestows his gifts upon humanity. Just as the poet of the second register has been honored with a statue (and perhaps a tripod) for his excellent verse, Homer also receives honors, and is depicted at the moment of receipt rather than of commemoration.

As the external viewer navigates between the divine and human realms, his or her eyes must pass across the figure of the poet represented as a statue. Newby has noted that this figure is a link between these realms but a participant in neither.⁸² In fact, his representation as a statue marks his incongruity in the realm of the gods. Newby writes of the register containing the statue: "The layers of reality and representation are complicated here. While the gods are shown as real figures, interacting with one another, the human poet is removed from the scene, present only in his statue. In literary accounts of divine epiphanies the gods are often presented in terms of their statues. Here, however, it is a human figure who intrudes into the divine world in sculpted form."⁸³ Like a visitor in his own dream, the poet is a stranger here, performing a reverse epiphany to the gods themselves.⁸⁴ The poet "intrudes" (and remains!) here, in contrast to the typical divine visitation, where the god invades the sleep or visual field of the viewer and then departs. The accounts of later authors such as Artemidorus and Aelius Aristides (whom Newby

cites), as well as the poetic descriptions of epiphany mentioned earlier, attest to the interchangeability of statue and dream image as similar vehicles for a god to cross the boundary between the divine and human realms and bring his message to a sleeping mortal. When considered against these accounts, the ability of the *poet* to bridge the divine and human realms as a sculpted representation of himself in the Archelaos relief seems less paradoxical. I suggest that this facet of the relief is similar to what we see at work in the dreamscape of Propertius 3.3.

The visually disorienting slippage between statue and animated figures in the relief is similar to that experienced in Propertius 3.3, where the poet dreams of himself as a visitor in the realm of the gods. The stance of the poet-statue in the relief is like that of the dreamer in the poem; both are pivot points between viewing the realm of the gods and that of humans. In the relief, live poet and animated gods (albeit here representations in static form) will only overlap in a realm to which the poet is transported in the form of a representation of himself. In the case of Propertius's dream, this manifests itself as a split between the dream world and the waking world, whose elements are mingled throughout the speeches and images of the poem. Both the relief and Propertius's poem explore the relationship between the divine and human realms through the alternation of opposites. In both contexts, the interaction between animated and inanimate, real and represented, creates for the viewer, dreamer, and reader a moment of visual uncertainty that heightens their awareness of the displacement necessary for poetic inspiration and artistic creativity.

At the level of the outer structure of poem 3.3, Propertius the narrator (i.e., the "real" Propertius, the one who recounts the dream after he has awakened) sees Propertius the poet as an actor in his dream. We could say that the dreamed figure is a representation of himself. One way that Propertius acknowledges the tension between real and dreamed (or "represented") is through his depiction of both Apollo and the poet-narrator, alternately described as though posed, frozen in mid-action, when they are first spied. Propertius sees himself reclining and poised to drink from the Hippocrene, having already moved into position, as the pluperfect *admoram* in line 5 indicates. Apollo too is first described as static, leaning on his golden lyre, and thus recalling the iconography and possibly the pose of actual sculptures of the god on the Palatine or elsewhere. On the relief, the figure of Apollo is linked to the figure of the poet-statue through stance and gesture, while the poet's representation as a statue distinctly separates him from his divine counterpart.

The poet is a mediator between the divine (natural) and human (artificial) realms. Represented by his statue, he is a conspicuously artificial element in the natural landscape of the gods, yet there he stands. The poet in statue form, as an

imago, is a representative of artistic refinement within the rustic realm of Zeus, Apollo, and the Muses. In addition to the dichotomies enumerated above, the relief presents a contrast between rustic and refined—or natural and artificial—where the upper three registers, representing the divine world, are marked by rocky crags and a cave, while the lower register, the mortal realm, is marked by the presence of a curtain, perhaps suggesting the artifice of a theater backdrop. Along with the other reminders of artistic creation such as the lyres, scrolls, and diptych held by the Muses, the sculpture of the poet and his scroll reminds the viewer of both the act of poetic creation (the result of his received inspiration) and the act of artistic creation (an artist's rendering of his likeness in sculpted form to commemorate his success). As in the Boscoreale room, the juxtaposition of the sculpture and the rustic cave emphasizes the contrast between natural and artificial in this realm.

Conclusion

While the poet's encounter with Apollo and the Muses in a rustic mountaintop setting during a dream undoubtedly brings to mind a well-established scenario for poetic initiation, the highly visual description of the poet's experience and the poem's emphasis upon viewing are typically Propertian. In this chapter I have demonstrated the importance of considering Propertius's initiation dream in poem 3.3 as a visual experience in which the dreamer's commentary on the images he sees through the distorting lens of his dream provides the framework for his narration. By evoking in poem 3.3 his subjective reactions to works of art in poems like 2.31, Propertius comments upon the dream itself as a type of representation, which, like a work of visual art, is capable of appearing to bring its referent to life. Our understanding of the poet's fictional accounts of viewing is enhanced by an examination of the different ways of viewing works of visual art.

In poem 3.3, as in the Archelaos relief, human and divine, as well as natural and artificial elements combine to comment upon poetic initiation as a negotiation between opposed realms that allows poets to integrate their poetic *ars* with the natural gift of inspiration. By alluding to the illusionistic techniques employed by visual artists, and by placing emphasis upon the viewer's visual engagement with these, Propertius invites the reader to think about the poet's role as an artist. The poet emphasizes the connection between dreaming and creativity by self-consciously drawing attention to visual experience as critical to his roles as viewer, actor, and narrator of his dream.

As I have shown, the Muses' dwelling in 3.3, which provides a visual interlude between Apollo's monologue and that of Calliope, is significant for its conspicuous refinement among the rustic environs of Mount Helicon. Furthermore, the grotto's

decorative attributes, emblems of human artifice and reminders of the poet's urbanity, disrupt the otherwise natural setting of the poem. I have also compared the poem's visual dynamics to the content of the complex Second Style wall-painting type exemplified by room M of the villa at Boscoreale. The painter of this room used imagery derived from familiar urban and sylvan settings to "break through" the walls with illusionistic juxtapositions and views that culminated in the representation of a cave. Propertius created a variegated diptych in his poem, shifting from a broad vista, which included the Hippocrene and the Castalian wood, to the refined decorative detail of the grotto. Like the viewer's experience in the Boscoreale room, the dreamer's experience in the poem is punctuated by alternating moments of awareness of, and absorption by, the visual medium through which his experience is made possible. This is reminiscent of the poet's account of the simultaneously silent and vocal sculptures in the poetic ekphrasis describing his visit to the Palatine Temple of Apollo.

In the end, our effort to identify the critical role of dreamer as viewer in Propertius's account of poetic initiation on Mount Helicon has permitted us to recognize an important feature of his dream poetics:⁸⁵ the dream is a microcosm for the essential feature of the elegiac experience itself. The poet's roles as both dreamer and actor *in* the dream reflect, in snapshot form, his dual roles as both the creator of, and a character *in*, his poetry, a dichotomy that forms the basis for his poetic persona. It is precisely this layered self-reflexivity, inherent in dreaming, that he exploits as he writes of himself as a dreamer. In poem 3.3, Propertius employs a poetic strategy that acknowledges and accentuates the disparity between epiphany/message dream and symbolic dream, dream and description, visual art and ekphrasis, experience and the representation of experience, and in so doing, re-fashions the initiation dream as a place for distilling and reflecting the subjective impulse of his poetry.



5 Sleeper's Dream/ Viewer's Image

*Rhea Silvia's Dream in Ovid's
Fasti Book 3*

In book 3 of the *Fasti*, Ovid describes the rape of the Vestal Virgin Rhea Silvia in her sleep by the god Mars, who departs before she wakes up, as well as the aftermath to this scene in which she awakes and relates a dream, presumably experienced during the rape. In that dream (lines 29–38), recounted in vivid pictorial terms, two palm trees spring up spontaneously from a fallen fillet, are threatened by an axe wielded by her uncle Amulius, and are protected by a woodpecker and a she-wolf. Like the dream of the cow and the bulls in *Amores* 3.5, Rhea Silvia's dream encodes a message in visual symbols, although in this case the dreamer remains unaware of its relevance. Here it is a prophecy of her twin sons' survival against great odds and Romulus's eventual kingship. Rhea Silvia's dream is the only symbolic dream in the *Fasti*, and for this reason alone it stands out within the work.¹

The story of Rhea Silvia's rape, her conception of the twins, and their fate as orphans was well known to Ovid's readers from both textual and visual sources. Often included as a scene in a longer narrative of Rome's origins, the encounter itself is valued only insofar as it establishes the divine lineage of Rome's first king, Romulus, and his brother, Remus. Rhea Silvia's part in the story is limited to her role in conceiving and bearing the twins. Her restricted role is exemplified by Livy's treatment of her story within his account of the life of Romulus. The historian alludes to the rape and conception of the twins by reference to their ambiguous patrimony. In book 1.4.2–3, he claims that Rhea Silvia either believed that Mars was actually their father or invented this story to cover her transgression:

Vi compressa Vestalis cum geminum partum edidisset, seu ita rata seu quia
deus auctor culpa honestior erat, Martem incertae stirpis patrem nuncupat.
Sed nec di nec homines aut ipsam aut stirpem a crudelitate regia vindicant:
sacerdos vincta in custodiam datur, pueros in profluentem aquam mitti
iubet.

[The Vestal was raped and, after giving birth to twin sons, named Mars as
the father of her doubtful offspring, whether she actually believed this or
because it seemed more respectable if a god was responsible for her offense.
But neither gods nor men protected either the mother or her offspring from
the king's cruelty; the priestess was chained and cast into prison; he ordered
the boys to be committed to the river.]

The final sentence of this passage is our last glimpse of Rhea Silvia (*sacerdos*) in the narrative of Rome's first king. The story of Romulus and Remus, the *pueri* mentioned in this same line, is told at length in sections 4, 5, and 6.

Although Ovid does not give Rhea Silvia a greater role than Livy did in the larger narrative of Rome's foundation by Romulus, the account in the *Fasti* provides the most extensive treatment of the prelude to the rape, the rape itself, and its immediate aftermath of any extant written version. Many critics have connected the erotic qualities of the encounter between Mars and Rhea Silvia in *Fasti* 3 with scenes familiar from the erotic elegy of Tibullus, Propertius, and Ovid's *Amores*, but there has been little consideration of her dream description in connection with the dream narratives of erotic elegy. This chapter will elucidate the features shared by her dream description and the dreams discussed earlier in this book, particularly as this dream emphasizes the visual experience of dreaming by exploiting techniques familiar from visual art. Consideration of several extant representations of the encounter between Mars and Rhea Silvia in Roman visual art will greatly enhance this aspect of the discussion.

Ovid places the story of Rhea Silvia's rape in between his narrative of the rape of Lucretia, told toward the end of book 2 (lines 685–856), and that of the abduction of the Sabine women, alluded to later in book 3 (lines 195–234).² Thus it forms part of a triad of rape narratives. At the level of the narrative within the *Fasti* itself, then, the story of Rhea Silvia's rape functions like the rapes of other female figures: the violation of their bodies leads to a major political development. As Carole Newlands has shown, Ovid follows Livy's account of Lucretia's story (1.57–60) closely in his own narrative of *Fasti* 2.³ By contrast, his version of Rhea Silvia's rape differs significantly from Livy's. Although Ovid's tale of Rhea Silvia is in keeping with his tale of Lucretia in focusing upon the female experience of violence

rather than the political consequences of the rape,⁴ it is his inclusion of Rhea Silvia's dream that distinguishes his version both from Livy's account and from the story of Lucretia that would have been fresh in the reader's mind.⁵ Rhea Silvia's description of her dream gives the reader a window into her personal, subjective experience, a mode of expression that is denied to Lucretia.⁶

The most obvious precedent for Ovid's account of Rhea Silvia's dream is its counterpart in Ennius's account of Ilia's dream in *Annales* book 1, considered in chapter 1 as an important predecessor to the dreams of elegy.⁷ The general influence of the *Annales* upon Ovid's *Fasti* is significant, as critics have demonstrated.⁸ Aside from the fact that these works are our only sources for Rhea Silvia's dream, there is evidence that Ovid had Ennius's account in mind when he created the proem to *Fasti* 3. Although there are marked differences between the content of the dreams—Ilia's dream recounts her own abduction by a stranger and the cryptic prophecy of her father, Aeneas, while Rhea Silvia has a vision of trees attacked by her axe-wielding uncle—in some respects Ovid's account specifically refers back to Ennius's version. Elena Merli points out, for example, that the external setting for the dream, a spot beside the banks of a river—"ventum erat ad molli declivem tramite ripam" ("she had come by a path to where it descended gently along the sloping bank," line 13)—makes a reality of the imagined dreamscape of Ilia's dream, in which she describes being led along a riverbank: "nam me visus homo pulcer per amoena salicta / et ripas raptare locosque novos" ("for a handsome man appeared to steal me away through pleasant willow groves and riverbanks—new places," 1.38–39).⁹ Furthermore, Aeneas's cryptic prophecy of the future glory of Ilia's sons—"o gnata, tibi sunt ante gerendae / aerumnae, post ex fluvio fortuna resistet" ("daughter, you will first have to bear hardships, but afterwards (your) fortune will rise from the river," lines 44–45)—is recast in the symbolic vision of Rhea Silvia's dream of the trees (lines 29–38). Urgency and palpable fear characterize each character's retelling of her dream, and the dreamer's ignorance of her dream's meaning is a prominent feature of both accounts.

The crucial differences between the dreams are also worth noting. One difference is the audience for the retelling of the dream. Ilia recounts hers to a nurse and her half sister, likely seeking interpretation.¹⁰ By contrast, Rhea Silvia's is not shared with a confidant but is uttered aloud as an exclamation upon waking. Within the narrative, there is no one present to hear her tale. The poem's reader, who has been the witness to her slow descent into sleep and her rape, is the extra-textual recipient of her dream narration. Another difference is the degree to which the dreamer participates in her own dream. Ennius's Ilia is an actor within her dream, and it is her sense of having been abducted and taken to unfamiliar locations (a jarring contrast to the comfort of her bedroom, where she wakes up) that causes

her feelings of terror. By contrast, Ovid's Rhea Silvia is mostly an observer of the images of her dream. Forced to watch its violent images, she wakes up feeling terror and confusion about the images themselves and their relevance for her.

Finally, there are precedents for Rhea Silvia's story in earlier love elegy. Although there is no reference to her dream there, her story would have been familiar to Ovid's readers from its treatment in his *Amores* 3.6 and Tibullus's elegy 2.5.¹¹ In *Amores* 3.6 Ovid tells the story of Rhea Silvia's "marriage" to the river Anio after the disgrace of her violated chastity. Citing Ovid's double usage of this tale as a way to point out his deftness in creating parallel episodes, Barbara Weiden Boyd notes that the portion of Rhea Silvia's story told in the *Amores* refers to elements of her earlier tale of violation without overlapping at all with the narrative told in the *Fasti*. Because the narratives "complete" one another, there is a suggestion that each should be read with the other in mind, thus forging a narrative connection between the amatory elegy of the *Amores* and the non-amatory elegy of the *Fasti*.

The mystery surrounding a sleeper's dreams is a familiar trope of Latin love elegy. Tibullus 1.5.13–14 and Propertius 2.29a.29–30, discussed above, provide good examples of the male lover's impulse to know his sleeping girlfriend's dreams. Propertius 1.3, as we have seen, combines the viewer's fascination with a sleeper and his jealous desire to know her dreams in a context that explicitly compares the sleeper with female characters from mythology whose appearance would have been familiar from works of visual art.¹² Thus Propertius 1.3 offers interesting points of comparison with the proem of *Fasti* 3, especially because of their shared evocation of imagery from works of visual art. By briefly reconsidering Propertius's earlier poem, we can identify in it some elements of the story of Rhea Silvia that reinforce its affinity with earlier love elegy.

The context for Rhea Silvia's dream within a larger narrative of the seduction of a sleeper recalls the explicit eroticization of the sleeper in Propertius 1.3. In both poems, a male figure sees a sleeping female figure and is possessed by desire for her. The use of the participle *visa* in each poem emphasizes the position of the sleeper as the object of the viewer's gaze. Cynthia is described with the nominative participle *visa* in 1.3.7–8: "talis visa mihi mollem spirare quietem / Cynthia" ("even so did Cynthia seem to me to breathe a gentle repose"). Rhea Silvia is the referent of the accusative participle *visam* in *Fasti* 3.21: "Mars videt hanc visamque cupit potiturque cupita" ("Mars saw her, he desired the one he had seen, and he possessed what he desired").

Merli briefly articulates a connection between the images of the female sleepers in the two poems in a footnote to her discussion of elegiac elements in the *Fasti*.¹³ Specifically, she notes the similarity between the *mollis quies* that overcomes Cynthia

in 1.3.7 and the *blanda quies* to which Rhea Silvia submits in line 19. The precarious balance of Cynthia's head in slumber ("non certis nixa caput manibus": "her head balanced on her uncertain hands," line 8) is evoked by Ovid's description of Rhea Silvia's hand slipping out from under her head: "et cadit a mento languida facta manus" ("and her weak hand dropped from her chin," line 20). In each case, attention to sleep as a dominant force and the unstable positions in which sleep suspends the sleeper play a role in heightening her appeal to the approaching viewer.¹⁴

Both poems contain references to the sleeper's disheveled hair. In Propertius 1.3 the narrator enjoys arranging it ("gaudebam lapsos formare capillos": "I took pleasure in building up your fallen locks," line 23); by contrast, in *Fasti* 3, Rhea Silvia arranges her own mussed hair in an attempt to combat the natural forces of her new landscape ("turbatas restituitque comas": "and she arranged her ruffled hair," line 16). This difference is consonant with the general tenor of the two scenes. The lover of poem 1.3 manipulates the sleeping Cynthia but does not rape her, while Rhea Silvia's attempt to compose herself or exert some control can be seen as futile, given the imminent rape, dream, and pregnancy, all beyond her control.

The dichotomy between the poems is also present in the different uses of the word *ocellis*, an elegiac marker for the power of the *puella* over the male lover.¹⁵ In Propertius 1.3.19 the word is used to describe the narrator's gaze as he looks upon the sleeper: "sed sic intentis haerebam fixus ocellis, / Argus ut ignotis cornibus Inachidos" ("but I remained rooted with eyes intent upon her, like those of Argus upon the strange horns of Inachus's child," lines 19–20). This image of the lover's steadfast and powerful gaze is an inversion of Cynthia's power to captivate him in poem 1.1: "Cynthia prima suis miserum me cepit ocellis" ("Cynthia first with her eyes ensnared wretched me," line 1). By contrast, in *Fasti* 3.19 *ocellis* is used to describe eyes overpowered by sleep: "blanda quies furtim victis obrepsit ocellis" ("sweet sleep crept stealthily over her conquered eyes").¹⁶ By contrast with these earlier uses, we see that Ovid's usage hints not at the power of the eyes to seduce or to maintain a possessive watch, but rather at the passivity exhibited by Rhea Silvia.

An additional similarity between the poems is the transformation of the sleeper after she wakes up. Cynthia wakes up and speaks, chastising her lover for his late arrival.¹⁷ Rhea Silvia also speaks, but makes no reference to her earlier waking state; rather, she reveals her dream and her ignorance of its meaning. This central difference between the two scenes inverts an episode from the earlier poem. In Propertius 1.3, the poet reveals that one source of his fascination with the sleeping Cynthia is the possibility that she may be dreaming as he watches her: "obstupui vano credulus auspicio / ne qua tibi insolitos portarent visa timores / neve quis invitam cogeret esse suam" ("I stood still believing in an empty sign, for

I feared that nightmares were bringing you unfamiliar terrors, and that another man was forcing you to yield to him against your will," lines 28–30). The narrator imagines that she has terrifying nightmares, specifically of rape. Rhea Silvia, on the other hand, has not merely dreamed of a rape—rather, she is raped as she dreams. Yet the images of her dream, like the opaque, sleeping Cynthia of Propertius 1.3, require additional decoding.

The "Unorthodox Elegy" of the *Fasti*

Ovid's *Fasti* has always been of interest to scholars as a source for information about Roman traditions and religious festivals. But any approach to the *Fasti* must also reconcile the challenges inherent in defining the poem as elegiac. Written in the elegiac meter and treating themes from the annalistic and epic traditions, such as Rome's origins and earliest rituals, the work eludes a neat generic classification.¹⁸ Stephen Hinds has called Ovid's mingling of genres "a dynamic principle, not a static one, which involves here not just observance but also creative transgression of the expected bounds of elegy."¹⁹ It is appropriate for my discussion of dreams in elegiac poetry to culminate with a discussion of the *Fasti*, as it comes later in the Augustan period and marks a shift from Ovid's earlier love elegy. Two obvious features that distinguish the elegiac poetry of the *Fasti* from those earlier poems are subject matter and the diminished presence of the first-person narrator and persona.²⁰ The Rhea Silvia episode—on both counts—deviates from the norm of the *Fasti*.

Ovid himself refers to the transgression of genre boundaries in the proem to book 2 (lines 3–8): for example, he draws attention to the change in subject matter from his earlier love elegy: "idem sacra cano signataque tempora fastis" ("I myself now sing of sacred rites and of the seasons marked in the calendar," line 7). The shift is almost unbelievable, he claims: "ecquis ad haec illinc crederet esse viam" ("who would believe that the road led here from there?" line 8).²¹ By referring directly to his previous amatory elegy and, by extension, the tradition of this poetry to which his work belonged, Ovid ensures that the readers of the *Fasti* keep these precedents in mind.

We must think of the *Fasti* as a work that is self-conscious about its mixing of generic themes and models. The poet's turn in the *Fasti* has been profitably compared to that of Propertius in book 4, where the themes of annalistic and epic poetry, and characters from Rome's foundation myths like Tarpeia, are presented in elegiac verse.²² Yet as Paul Allen Miller has observed, these poems do not simply convey epic themes in elegiac verse; rather, there is something fundamentally elegiac about the poet's presentation of characters and stories familiar from Roman

mythological and historical tradition.²³ Propertius eroticizes the story of Tarpeia in elegy 4.4, for example, by emphasizing her desire for Tatiuz and creating for her a speech that reflects the language and themes familiar from his earlier first-person elegies.²⁴ As Miller notes, this subjectivity aligns Tarpeia with the elegiac poet whose subjective voice has dominated the preceding three books.²⁵

The female speakers of Propertius's fourth book share with the heroines of Ovid's *Heroides* an erotic subjectivity. Like the letter-writers in the *Heroides*, who tell their stories in the first person, Rhea Silvia narrates her dream in the first person. Ovid thus allows the perspective of the individual into a story based in the world of myth, much as he does in the *Heroides*, and gives Rhea Silvia a particular subjectivity. Furthermore, she is abandoned by Mars after the rape and thus shares with the fictional heroines of the *Heroides* the emotional context that is the catalyst for their laments and expressions of desire. Rhea Silvia, rather than writing a letter, pours out an emotion-laden account of her terrifying dream. In this way she acts like an elegiac narrator, such as Tibullus or Propertius, who sees some element of his relationship with a lover reflected in a dream's images and narrates an account of his experience. As we shall see, the episode of Mars and Rhea Silvia displays elements familiar from amatory elegy that, when analyzed together, give us new perspective upon what Hinds calls "the unorthodox elegy" of the *Fasti*.²⁶

Elements of Love Elegy in the Proem to *Fasti* Book 3

Book 3 of the *Fasti* is dedicated to the month of March and the concerns of its namesake, Mars, the god of war. Ovid brings the god into his poem through an invocation that reads like an invitation to join him in revealing the calendar of March. Thus Mars arrives like a visitor to his own month. But it becomes immediately obvious in the proem that the Mars of book 3 will not preside exclusively over martial exploits. Our first indication comes when the poet implores the god to put aside his weapons despite his warlike nature. Mars, the emblem of warfare and the concerns of epic poetry, is very notably disarmed at the beginning of the book, making him a physical hybrid of the genres of epic and elegy: although he embodies epic concerns, he enters his story as though an elegiac *amator*.²⁷ This dichotomy between the god's nature and his appearance is encapsulated by the book's first couplet, where his name and his epithet *bellice* ("warlike") precede separate images of his arms laid aside and his helmet removed: "bellice, depositis clipeo paulisper et hasta, / Mars, ades et nitidas casside solve comas" ("Warlike Mars, come; put aside your shield and spear for a bit and release your shining hair from your helmet," lines 1–2). The poet's question to the reader

in line 3—"fortisan ipse roges, quid sit cum Marte poetae" ("perhaps you may ask what business a poet has with Mars")—reinforces the idea that the martial themes of epic poetry are alien to a poet like Ovid, known for his amatory themes. As Niklas Holzberg has observed, "The book on Mars will unfold under the sign of a Mars without weapons, because war will scarcely be mentioned in it. On the other hand, the book will frequently deal with things erotic, some of which will even involve the god of war."²⁸ Mars engages in "things erotic" in the proem itself, offering proof of the miscegenation of genre to which Ovid alluded in the proem to book 2.

The poet entices the god to disarm himself by reminding him of his previous actions when disarmed, and in particular his rape of Rhea Silvia. It is generally agreed that the disarming of Mars at the very outset of the book and his subsequent depiction in the beginning of the proem serves to eroticize him.²⁹ Unarmed, the god no longer has the appearance of a warrior and hence is more like the elegiac narrator, who eschews combat in favor of the private delights of his lover, engaging instead in a *militia amoris*.³⁰ The image of an unarmed Mars is not just a general reference to a mollified war god; it specifically recalls the Mars of erotic elegy: the disarmed god who seduces Ilia in Tibullus 2.5, as we see in the following lines (51–54):

te quoque iam video, Marti placitura sacerdos
 Ilia, Vestales deseruisse focos,
 concubitusque tuos furtim vittasque iacentes
 et cupidi ad ripas arma relictā dei.

[Now I see you too, Ilia, priestess who is to be pleasing to Mars, having abandoned the Vestal hearth. I see your secret intercourse, and your fillet lying cast off, and the arms of the desirous god left upon the banks.]

Alessandro Barchiesi has observed that "this story is universally famous, but Ovid has selected a combination of elements for which there is a clear parallel in the elegiac poetry of the Augustan age."³¹ We saw that Ovid had already looked back at his telling of Ilia's tale in *Amores* 3.6 before broaching the subject in the *Fasti*. As Barbara Weiden Boyd has noted, aside from the fact that the story told in the *Fasti* provides the "backstory" to the one told in the *Amores*, the image of the fallen fillet provides a visual connection between the two vignettes.³² The fillet also connects the earlier Tibullus 2.5 and the scene in the *Fasti*. But the image of the unarmed Mars is an equally compelling connection between the two descriptions of the encounter.

This assimilation of the god of war into Ovid's elegiac project in the *Fasti* is progressive. As the new book gets under way, the god becomes more like an elegiac lover as he enters the poem and moves further into the narrative. The movement begins with his disarming. His present disarming recalls for the narrator an earlier instance, which leads into a reminiscence of the past, when Mars plays a role like that of an elegiac lover. The ways in which Ovid eroticizes Mars should help us understand how to look at the rest of the *Fasti* episode as reflective of an elegiac sensibility. Lest we think that the complexities of genre make it difficult to integrate the *Fasti* into our discussion of dreams in love elegy, it should be noted that it is precisely these complexities that open other possibilities for us to connect this passage to the earlier works of love elegy in novel ways.

Prelude to a Dream

The Approach of Mars

Before considering the juxtaposed scenes of Rhea Silvia's rape and the retelling of her dream, it is important to consider Mars's entrance into book 3 and onto the scene as a prelude to their encounter. Ovid summons the god to begin his new book on the month of March in lines 1 and 2: "bellice, depositis clipeo paulisper et hasta, / Mars, ades et nitidas casside solve comas" ("Warlike Mars, come; put aside your shield and spear for a bit and release your shining hair from your helmet"). This line implies that the god's visit will be temporary (*paulisper*) and will involve transformation from *bellicus* to the distinctly unwarlike state of disarmament, as implied by the verbs *deponere* and *solvere*. The poet entreats the god to alter his appearance as the poet prepares to alter the god's role for the purposes of this new narrative.

Many transitions are implied by the god's arrival. Most obviously, his disarming connotes a shift from epic poetry and its martial concerns to those of elegy. This passage is in turn mirrored by the implied shift from the sky to the earth, as the god descends from the heavens to join the poet in his earthly realm. The poet's vocative address to the god and the verb *ades* (line 2) express the poet's desire for the god's proximity and company; by shedding his martial attributes, Mars becomes more accessible to the poet. Barchiesi classifies the god's transition in generic terms, characterizing the physical descent from the sky as a demotion in poetic genre: "while Venus [in book 4] has to move up from the low level of elegy, Mars has to move in the opposite direction."³³

The invocation of Mars and his transition into the book also mark a significant movement from the present (his arrival in the poem occurs during the present

time of Ovid's composition) to reminiscence about and narration of events of the past (the god's rape of Rhea Silvia occurred during Rome's distant past). The god is enticed by the poet to discover what he can do unarmed in line 8: "invenies et quod inermis agas" ("you will find something to do unarmed"). It is this state of being *inermis* that provides the link between Mars's arrival in the present and his return to the past. The shift in verb tenses from future to imperfect associated with the repetition of the adjective *inermis* confirms the god's transportation to the setting of the narration of his past exploits: "invenies . . . inermis" (line 8), and "tum quoque inermis eras, cum . . . cepit" ("then too were you unarmed when the Roman priestess captivated you," lines 9–10).

The elements of Mars's physical and spatial transformation are thus matched by his temporal movement from present to past as he enters Ovid's narrative through a memory of the past. The reader too is brought into the frame by the poet's claim to be retelling a story from the past. As we shall see, Mars listens to the story of himself from a detached third-person standpoint, as he "witnesses" the narrative unfold from Ovid's description of Rhea Silvia. After the second-person verbs of lines 9 and 10 (*eras, dares*), Mars's entry into the story is delayed until line 21. When he does appear in the narrative, he appears as an actor in the third person ("Mars videt," line 21). The prominent placement of his name in the nominative as the first word in the line will recall its previous appearance in the vocative in the same position in line 2. This resonance underscores Ovid's deft disarming and swift transformation of Mars from addressee to witness to participant in the scene.³⁴

Rhea Silvia is introduced in lines 9–10, where Ovid notes that a Roman priestess "seduced" Mars ("te Romana sacerdos / cepit"). This is, of course, paradoxical: we find out that she achieved this "seduction" while in the vulnerable and passive state of sleep (lines 17–20). Considering the case of Mars and Rhea Silvia in isolation, the verb *cepit* seems at least ironic if not implausible. But we need only recall the opening line of Propertius's monobiblos ("Cynthia prima suis miserum me cepit ocellis") to appreciate Ovid's allusion to the language of possession that characterizes the relationship between lovers in amatory elegy.³⁵ With this opening line Propertius characterizes an important aspect of his relationship with Cynthia, which will be explored throughout the book, but he also gives her name to his book. Ovid's Rhea Silvia has a similar function in *Fasti* 3, in the sense that it is she who opens the book. Even though Ovid delays mention of her name until line 11, he cites her as the beginning point (*inde*) of the book in a deliberative parenthetical aside: "Silvia Vestalis (quid enim vetat inde moveri?)" ("Vestal Silvia [for what prevents me from starting with her?]"). Even though Mars gives his name to the month, Rhea Silvia gives her name to the poem of book 3, and thus her story, although fleeting, deserves special attention.

Rhea Silvia's Arrival

Rhea Silvia does not simply appear on the scene asleep; rather, she, like Mars, arrives from elsewhere. In fact, her arrival on the scene has a purpose: she comes to the river in order to collect water for washing holy objects: “sacra lavaturas mane petebat aquas” (“[she] went in the morning to fetch water to wash the holy things,” line 12). Her forward movement is interrupted, however, when she stops at the riverbank, just short of the point at which the road descends to the river: “ventum erat ad molli declivem tramite ripam” (“she had come by a path to where it descended gently along the sloping bank,” line 13). The passive impersonal phrase *ventum erat* removes agency from Rhea Silvia, thus detracting emphasis from her movement and shifting focus to her position within the poet's descriptive tableau. From this point on in her narrative (through line 42), no words hint at her forward movement; for the rest of her narrative, she remains in one spot, although her level of verticality changes. Thus Ovid firmly establishes Rhea Silvia in the space of his narrative, and thus she fulfills her role as the narrative “place from which” (*inde*, line 11) Ovid extends his reminiscence about Rome's origins.

*The Tableau of the Sleeping Rhea Silvia
(Lines 14–20)*

After stopping in her journey to the river, Rhea Silvia puts down her urn, thus abandoning the vessel that would have enabled her to carry out the task she was meant to perform, but also signaling her transition from upright to stooped: “ponitur e summa fictilis urna coma” (“she set down her earthenware pitcher from her head,” line 14). As she changes her posture, she also becomes static, her own movement supplanted by the description of the movement and sounds of the natural elements around her. In a sense, Rhea Silvia assimilates progressively to the landscape. Furthermore, as it is placed on the ground, her urn becomes her physical emblem, for she too is about to move from standing to sitting to lying recumbent on the earth: “ponitur urna,” line 14, is followed by “fessa resedit humo” (“exhausted, she sat on the ground,” line 15).

Rhea Silvia's subsequent action of loosening her garment—“ventosque accepit aperto / pectore” (“and she opened her bosom to catch the breezes,” lines 15–16)—increases her vulnerability. She has loosened it simply to attract a cooling breeze, but she will soon be “open” to a force greater than the breeze, as Mars will come upon her suddenly. In the following line, Ovid reveals that she composes her disheveled hair: “turbatas restituitque comas” (“and she arranged her ruffled hair,” line 16). This detail contrasts with the loosening of her garment and draws

attention to her appearance as self-consciously crafted and even harmonious. The result of this action also increases her allure, while underscoring the physical toll of her exhaustion.

This gesture of arranging her hair provides a contrast to the appearance of Mars, who, although in a position of superiority to Rhea Silvia, was commanded by Ovid to loosen his hair from his helmet as part of his disarming in line 2 (“*nitidas casside solve comas*”), as we recall. The image of Mars’s shining, freed locks is replaced by that of Rhea Silvia’s disheveled locks as the adjective *turbatas* in line 16 appears in the same line position before the caesura as *nitidas* did in line 2, while *comas* is the final word in both lines.

The elements of the setting that play upon the senses other than vision—namely, the cool protection from the sun provided by the shady willows (*umbrosae salices*, line 17) and the pleasant sounds of the birds and water (*volucres canorae* and *leve murmur aquae*, lines 17–18)—cause Rhea Silvia to fall asleep and slip down from her propped-up position. The intrusion of these details allows the reader increased access to the scene’s idyllic setting while encouraging him or her to appreciate its features specifically in terms of how they affect Rhea Silvia, the central character. These sensory features do not merely set the scene and suggest the physical appearance of the place; rather, they establish the relevance of the setting for what is going to happen. Furthermore, the willows, birds, and water that create the sounds and sensations that lull Rhea Silvia also suggest the visual elements of a landscape tableau. The last sound she hears before drifting into sleep is that of the river’s purling water, which is now flowing past her instead of into the vessel she had brought to collect it. This reminds the reader that this interlude is a distraction from the original duty that brought her to the river. As the water rushes past, Rhea Silvia not only fails to collect it, but rather succumbs to its charm and becomes available for the rape that will prevent her from performing the rites of Vesta ever again. The river continues to flow as she sinks into a state of oblivion.

This shift away from the visual is re-emphasized by the reference to her closed eyes (*victis ocellis*) in line 19; with her eyes closed, she is entering a private world that will be distinct from the one seen by Mars and by the reader. As Rhea Silvia becomes part of the viewer’s visual landscape, she herself loses her ability to see. She cedes her ability to see with her eyes as she becomes the object of Mars’s desirous gaze. But in a reversal of great significance, her inability to see outwardly with her eyes will contrast with the internal vision of her dream.

The use of the adjective *languida* (line 20) to describe her hand as it drops from her chin contributes to the sense that she is descending further toward the ground, continuing the failure of her body to guard against Mars’s attack. The hand propped on her chin was the final symbol of her alertness; sleep brings a

complete lack of mental and visual engagement with her surroundings. Her reaction to the elements of her surroundings indicates her absorption into the landscape. Her languid body becomes, in its state of oblivion, something to be observed. The success of this transformation is confirmed by the fact that Mars, confronted with the scene the narrator describes so vividly for the reader's benefit, insinuates himself into it by becoming a viewer (*videt*) in line 21, with Rhea Silvia as the object of his vision (*visam*) in the same line.

The Rape

Compared with the lengthy and languorous setup of the tableau prior to this point, Mars's rape of Rhea Silvia, which is described in cryptic, indirect terms, seems disproportionately quick and mysterious. This is consonant with the suggestion of virtually all literary and visual representations of the tale that it is not the actual encounter between the two that is of greatest importance for their story, but rather its aftermath. Ovid summarizes the rape in lines 21–22: “Mars videt hanc visamque cupit potiturque cupita / et sua divina furta fefellit ope” (“Mars saw her, he desired the one he had seen, and he possessed what he desired, but by his divine power, he hid his stolen pleasures”). Despite the fact that he entered the narrative unarmed (*inermis*, line 9), and hence less aggressive, Mars is dominant for the brief couplet in which the rape is described. This is the only time Mars appears in the narrative of his encounter with Rhea Silvia, and thus his presence is a hinge between the objective visual tableau of Rhea Silvia and her personal account of the images of her dream. Mars and the reader share a perspective on the sleeping Rhea Silvia; Mars has listened to and the reader has envisioned Ovid's extended description of her interrupted journey and descent into oblivion. Mars views her (*videt*), and she is immediately described as the object of his vision (*visam*).³⁶ The lengthy description of Rhea Silvia falling asleep in the idyllic landscape beside the river, with which Ovid has entertained Mars and the reader for over ten lines, is reduced to the pronoun *hanc* in line 21. It is as though Ovid, with his lucid and alluring description of the scene, has re-created it in such detail in order to convince the reader of how quickly and potently Mars was seduced when he saw Rhea Silvia like this, but also in order to lure the god into the narrative at this point, just as the reader is being lured.

Mars arrives at the scene and is immediately characterized as a viewer: “Mars videt” (line 21). *Videt* is the first present-tense verb since *vetat* in line 11, and it links the Mars of the past with that of the present, also creating for the reader a sense of immediacy for the god's past actions. Furthermore, the switch in tenses between the description of Rhea Silvia's repose (using imperfect- and perfect-tense verbs)

and that of Mars's action (present-tense *videt*, *cupit*, and *potitur*) reinforces the idea that she has been "arranged" for his approach. The natural result of her progressive assimilation into the landscape is that she becomes a viewed object.³⁷ All of this information is condensed into the participle *visam*.

The second line of the couplet, "et sua divina furta fefellit ope" (line 22), returns to the use of the past tense, reminding the reader that this is a narration of events from Rome's distant origins—a fact that was temporarily obscured when Mars's actions were described in the present tense. The line reveals Mars's ability to escape from the scene as stealthily as he arrived, and the reason Rhea Silvia will have no memory of the physical experience she has just endured. But by describing Mars's action as a deception ("furta fefellit"), the line also hints at what will be left for Rhea Silvia after the rape: the obscure and potentially deceptive images of her dream.

Rhea Silvia Awakens
(Lines 23–26)

At line 23 Rhea Silvia awakens from the sleep that had immobilized and silenced her during the rape, now able to recount the contents of her dream to the reader, as she does four lines later (lines 27–38). A description of her awakening bridges these scenes:

somnus abit, iacet ipsa gravis; iam scilicet intra
viscera Romanae conditor urbis erat.
languida consurgit, nec scit cur languida surgat, 25
et peragit tales arbore nixa sonos . . .

[Sleep left her; she lay big, for already within her womb there was Rome's founder. She rose feeling weak, and she did not know why she rose weak, and leaning on a tree she spoke these words . . .]

Unlike the detailed buildup to her lapsing into sleep, Rhea Silvia's awakening is abrupt. Ovid does not mention Mars's departure, but we learn that sleep leaves her ("somnus abit") as abruptly as Mars came upon and saw her ("Mars videt"); perhaps Mars and *somnus*, agent and enabler of deception, depart simultaneously. This four-line passage (lines 23–26) presents a reversal of the action taken by Rhea Silvia leading up to the rape. In this passage we see her lying down—"iacet ipsa gravis" ("she lay big," line 23)—as she was when Mars approached her. The focus here is not on her external appearance, as the adjective *gravis* might initially indicate,

but rather on the transformation that has occurred within her body because of her new pregnancy: “iam scilicet intra / viscera Romanae conditor urbis erat” (“for already within her womb there was Rome’s founder,” lines 23–24). The repetition of the adjective *languida* in line 25 to describe her unsteadiness on her feet as she rises recalls Ovid’s use of the same word in line 20 to describe the instability of her arm as it gives way under the weight of her head. In a sense, she never really shakes off the weakening effects of her sleep, for even as she leans against a tree for support (“arbore nixa,” line 26), she recounts her dream as though still experiencing it and remains sluggish through the remainder of the passage.

The alliterative nouns *somnus* (23) and *sonos* (26), which appear in an extended chiasmus (“*somnus abit . . . peragit sonos*”), bookend the four-line passage that prefaces her dream account. As Ovid shifts from describing her sleep (*somnus*) to presenting her direct speech (*sonos*), the narrative switches from third-person to a first-person narration of the experience of the rape. In other words, the reader gets two perspectives on it: one literal and objective, told by a third-party observer, and one symbolic and subjective, told from the viewpoint of the dreamer and participant in the dream. Rhea Silvia moves from narrated to narrator and from viewed to viewer in the same sweep. The switch from objective to subjective narration mimics that between the objective viewership of Mars and the reader and the subjective viewership of the dreamer. What the narrator recounts in the cryptic couplet of lines 21–22, Rhea Silvia elaborates over many lines.

Furthermore, her move from object for narration to subjective narrator occurs along with a transformation in the reader’s visual engagement with her story. The reader had initially seen her from the outside as an object for visual consumption; with the shift in narration to her first-person account of the dream, the reader also engages visually—this time as a viewer of the symbolic terms of her experience. The reader is not simply an observer; rather, he or she is encouraged by Rhea Silvia’s lively narration to watch the dream, as though experiencing it like the dreamer.

By rising to her feet, Rhea Silvia reverses the movement that brought her down to sleep, but she still shares some of the qualities of her sleeping counterpart, such as her languidness, as discussed above. Also shared is ignorance of what happened to her physically while she slept and her parallel ignorance of the meaning of the dream that appeared to her. The reader, although aware of Mars’s presence in the scene and the god’s indulgence of his desire, is not privileged to know the details of the attack. In this way, Ovid “deceives” the reader by withholding an account of the rape.

This withholding of information may remind us of Ovid’s poetic technique in *Amores* 1.5, in which he introduces his lover, Corinna, by name and describes an

afternoon tryst with her. In this well-known earlier poem, he describes in graphic and precise detail their combative foreplay, but instead of describing their love-making, he merely alludes to it with the coy question "Cetera quis nescit?" ("Who does not know the rest?" line 25). The remainder of line 25—"lassi requievimus ambo" ("we both lay exhausted")—cuts immediately to the couple's postcoital repose, relegating to the silence of the caesura of this line the peak between excitement and exhaustion. As Patricia Salzman-Mitchell has argued, this elision is a source of frustration for the reader, but it also forces him or her away from the position of voyeur (shared with the narrator) and into the role of creator of his or her own imagined narrative of the missing scene.³⁸

In *Amores* 1.5 the poet's question to the reader at line 25, which masks the moment of sexual intercourse, is actually (perhaps somewhat ironically) the climax of the poem itself. By contrast, Ovid's brief description of the rape of Rhea Silvia in *Fasti* 3 is a hinge between the prelude to the rape and its aftermath, both of which are described for the reader in such a way that they can be envisioned as visual tableaux. In the *Fasti* passage, the reader is left without knowledge of the consummation of Mars's desire, but instead of being thrust away from the scene and out of the poem as in *Amores* 1.5, the reader is given an alternative narrative of the rape, a dream told in symbols. By keeping Mars's involvement in the tale so brief, Ovid encourages the reader to connect the two passages on either side of it.

Commenting on the role of the "embedded" reader of Ovid's texts, Boyd describes a reader who looks "backwards and forwards for guidance and direction, in search of meaningful patterns."³⁹ In her analysis of *Metamorphoses* book 8, Boyd identifies various ways in which Ovid seeks to "embed" his reader in the text. I would argue that Ovid has a similar desire in the *Fasti*. I have already shown how he lures the reader into the narrative as he summons Mars into book 3. Both enjoy, as viewers, Ovid's detailed description of Rhea Silvia's gradual descent into sleep as she tarries beside a river in Mars's grove. Once "embedded" in the text, the reader is able to shift back and forth between scenes, identifying connections between passages. For example, reading the revelation "intra / viscera Romanae conditor urbis erat" in lines 23–24, immediately after the description of the rape, the reader comprehends the relevance of the purpose clause "ut huic urbi semina magna dares" from line 10. The *semina* from line 10, used to refer both to "seed" and "offspring,"⁴⁰ are recalled with the image of Rome's founder (*conditor*) growing from Mars's seed within Rhea Silvia (*intra viscera*). Appreciation of the events surrounding her conception of the twins stems from the reader's ability to connect elements from the visual tableau of the prelude to the rape scene with those of the symbolic dream. Let us turn now to Rhea Silvia's description of her dream.

**The Dream Recounted
(Lines 27–38)**

The Fillet and the Trees

Objective description gives way to subjective narration as Rhea Silvia shifts from viewed object (in lines 11–22) to viewer herself (lines 27–38):

“Utile sit faustumque, precor, quod imagine somni
 vidimus: an somno clarius illud erat?
 Ignibus Iliacis aderam, cum lapsa capillis
 decidit ante sacros lanea vitta focos. 30
 Inde duae pariter, visu mirabile, palmae
 surgunt: ex illis altera maior erat,
 et gravibus ramis totum protexerat orbem
 contigeratque sua sidera summa coma.
 Ecce meus ferrum patruus molitur in illas: 35
 terrore admonitu, corque timore micat.
 Martia, picus, avis gemino pro stipite pugnant
 et lupa: tuta per hos utraque palma fuit.”

[May it turn out useful and favorable, I pray, what I saw in a vision of sleep: or was the vision too clear for sleep? I was by the fire of Ilium, when the woolen fillet slipped from my hair and fell before the sacred hearth. From the fillet rise—amazing to see—two palm trees side by side. One of them was taller and with its heavy branches had made a roof over the whole world, and had touched the highest stars with its leaves. Lo! My uncle wields an axe against the trees; I am frightened by this warning and my heart throbs with fear. A woodpecker—the bird of Mars—and a she-wolf fight in defense of the twin trunks, and by their help both of the palms were saved.]

In using the verb *vidimus* (line 28) to begin her dream description, Rhea Silvia usurps the role of active viewer from Mars (cf. *videt*, line 21). Furthermore, this verb explicitly characterizes her dream as a visual experience and thus aligns her with her predecessors among elegiac dreamers. This notion is reinforced by the use of the phrase *imago somni* in line 27 to preface the dream description and the exclamation *visu mirabile* in line 31. Rhea Silvia's references to her own viewing experience suggest a mode of viewing for the reader to emulate as he or she imagines the dream.

The context for her declaration, however, undermines her conviction that she has actually seen what she initially claims to have seen. In this way her use of *vidimus* differs from Propertius's unusual use of *vidi* to begin his dream description in poem 2.26a. In line 28, she follows the verb with the question "an somno clarius illud erat?" ("or was the vision [i.e., what I saw in the dream] too clear for sleep?"). In addition to destabilizing her conviction that she has seen a dream image rather than a waking hallucination, there is a degree of irony in her question about the vividness of the dream, for what she claims to have seen—the symbolic imagery—is itself masking the reality of her rape. So the adjective *clarius*, referring to the intensity of the dream's violent and frightening imagery, is not actually so "clear"; rather, it is misleading in that the scene it describes is itself at one remove from reality (the rape). On the other hand, from the reader's perspective, certain elements and structural features of the dream reflect the outer narrative, and thus the dreamer's declaration that the dream seemed like reality has a second resonance for the reader: the images of the dream recall what he or she has seen prior to its narration.

In contrast with Ennius's account of Ilia's dream, for example, Rhea Silvia does not appear as a character in her own dream except at the very beginning, when she claims that she was beside the sacred fire of Ilium ("ignibus Iliacis aderam," line 29); for the remainder of the dream, she is merely an observer of the dynamic scene revealed before her. In the *cum* clause that follows, the subject switches to her fillet, which falls to the ground before the fire in lines 29 and 30 ("cum lapsa capillis / decidit ante sacros lanea vitta focus"). From this point on, subjects other than Rhea Silvia dominate the action of the dream. The fillet is an obvious symbol for her violated chastity, as it alludes to her dereliction of duty as a Vestal Virgin, but it also provides a parallel to her posture as a sleeper in the previous scene.⁴¹ The position of the fillet is like that of Rhea Silvia in the outer narrative; both have slipped to the ground. In their respective positions each is more vulnerable; additionally, the proximity of the fillet to the fire of the hearth suggests imminent danger, such as that which Mars poses in the outer narrative. This relationship between fillet and sleeper is important for connecting the visual elements of both scenes, and thus for contextualizing the dream within its larger setting. As the fillet lies on the ground, allowing the trees contained in the image to spring forth from it, seemingly spontaneously and without connection to any element of their surroundings, so too will Rhea Silvia produce the twins. But an additional, more subtle parallel is worth observing: the dream image arises in the imagination of the prostrate sleeping Rhea Silvia herself, and it too seems to her disconnected from the events that surround it, like the trees growing from the fillet.

Contrasting with the horizontality of the fallen fillet are the dream's soaring, enclosing trees, whose description occupies the two couplets in lines 31–34. In his discussion of Ovid's complex presentation of time in the *Fasti*, Paul Murgatroyd has identified a confluence of prophecy and retrospective narration in Rhea Silvia's dream description, which at once looks backward on the dream and, implicitly, on the rape, and forward to the consequences of the rape.⁴² This feature of "confluence" has direct relevance for understanding the role of *enargeia* in the dream.⁴³

Beginning in line 29, Rhea Silvia narrates the dream using verbs in the present and past tenses, although the events foretold by the symbols in lines 31 and following will not actually transpire until sometime in the future, when her gestation is over. This temporal confluence is particularly evident in the description of the soaring movement and swift growth of the palm trees in lines 32–34, where Ovid uses three different verb tenses: *surgunt*, (*maior*) *erat*, *protexerat*, *contigerat*. It is interesting to note that the pluperfect verbs *protexerat* and *contigerat* refer to events that will actually occur *last* chronologically in the story of Romulus and Remus—namely, Romulus's domination of his brother and eventual sole kingship. Ovid exploits the confusion of linear temporal progression familiar from dreams in order to simulate the experience of a dream but also, I would argue, to mimic the dreamer's own confusion about the origin and meaning of her dream's images (as is evident from lines 25 and 27–28).

Rhea Silvia's attention to motion in the dream description thus re-creates for the reader the dynamic vision of the dream. In fact, she creates *enargeia* particularly through her use of verbs to describe the movement of the trees through space *and* time; for example, *surgere* implies movement upward from the ground, while the image of a tree growing from a seed necessarily connotes development over time. The present tense in *surgunt* creates a sense of immediacy, reinforcing the implication that the dream images themselves sprang up spontaneously and grew quickly before the eyes of the dreamer. I would like to suggest that this emphasis upon movement and growth in the dream suggests a forward narrative thrust that marks the dream as a passageway between the rape of Rhea Silvia, which it follows, and the birth of the twins, which it previsions. After all, like a dream, whose images may reveal their true meaning only after some time, a pregnancy conceals something latent.

The Attack on the Trees

Once the palm trees have grown, and one has shot ahead of the other, foretelling one brother's dominance over his twin, the trees are threatened

by the intervention of the sole human figure in the dream: Rhea Silvia's uncle Amulius (lines 35–38):

ecce meus ferrum patruus molitur in illas
 terrear admonitu, corque timore micat
 Martia, picus avis gemino pro stipite pugnant
 et lupa: tuta per hos utraque palma fuit.

[Lo! My uncle wields an axe against the trees; I am frightened by this warning and my heart throbs with fear. A woodpecker—the bird of Mars—and a she-wolf fight in defense of the twin trunks, and by their help both of the palms were saved.]

Amulius will ultimately be responsible for Rhea Silvia's punishment and the exposure of the twins (lines 49–51), and thus it is appropriate that he appear as an aggressor in the dream of the twins' future. But his violent act plays a specific role in the context of the dream, as it precipitates a subjective intervention by Rhea Silvia in the form of a commentary upon her emotional response to what she has seen. Like *visu mirabile*, the interjections of line 36 (“*terrear admonitu, corque timore micat*”) remind the reader of the dreamer's presence as witness to the dream; in Rhea Silvia's case, she is also a character in the dream. In each role, she is marginalized and helpless to intervene in the action she observes. Because of the present tenses used in *terrear* and *micat*, it is unclear whether she is recalling her response to what she witnessed in the dream at the time of dreaming it, or commenting during the narration on her reaction to the dream's sinister prophecy, as *admonitu* would seem to indicate. This ambiguity heightens the sense that the dreamer is experiencing the dream for a second time as she relates it. The deictic *ecce* at the beginning of the line also places the dream scenario before the eyes of narrator and reader, thus increasing the reader's sensation of being present as a witness to the images of the dream while reading the narrator's account.⁴⁴

The final scene of the dream is contained by the couplet in lines 37–38: “*Martia, picus avis gemino pro stipite pugnant / et lupa: tuta per hos utraque palma fuit.*” Rhea Silvia's inability to intervene in the action of the dream is countered by the arrival and succor of the woodpecker, a bird associated with Mars, and the she-wolf. The woodpecker's sudden appearance and decisive and powerful action remind the reader of Mars's swift arrival, violent action, and equally quick departure earlier in the narrative, as they also foreshadow the re-appearance of the woodpecker later in the twins' story: “*lacte quis infantes nescit crevisse ferino, / et picum expositis saepe tulisse cibos?*” (“Who does not know

that the infants were nourished by the milk of a wild beast, and that a woodpecker often brought food to the abandoned twins?" lines 53–54). The importance of the twins' divine paternity, suggested obliquely by the woodpecker's role as nourisher, is reiterated in Romulus's first speech as king, when he decides to name the first month of the calendar after his father (lines 75–76). Thus the image of the woodpecker in the dream recalls the action of Mars prior to the dream while it also hints at his subsequent importance in the twins' narrative.

The important role of the *lupa* as protector of the twins in the dream also foreshadows her role as savior and surrogate mother after their abandonment. It is her milk to which Ovid refers later in line 53 (*lacte ferino*). The appearance of progenitor and nurturer at this critical point in the dream further emphasizes Rhea Silvia's marginal role in the twins' biography after their birth. Her role is that of a vessel for her sons' gestation, not a participant in their upbringing. She is merely a point of transition between Mars and the she-wolf as the significant "parents." Likewise, at the level of the narrative, she is a vessel for the dream of their future, which she witnesses and conveys to the reader without participating in its action.

Let us return briefly to the lines preceding her revelation of the dream, where Ovid combines her lack of awareness of her pregnant state with her confession of ignorance about her dream's meaning (lines 25–28):

Languida consurgit nec scit, cur languida surgat,	25
et peragit tales arbore nixa sonos:	
"Utile sit faustumque, precor, quod imagine somni	
vidimus: an somno clarius illud erat?"	

[She rose feeling weak, and she did not know why she rose weak, and leaning on a tree she spoke these words: "May it turn out useful and favorable, I pray, what I saw in a vision of sleep: or was the vision too clear for sleep?"]

These lines foreshadow both her nonparticipation as a viewer of her dream and her imminent absence from the events that the dream presages. In line 25 Ovid tells us that she rose to her feet tired but unaware of the cause for her exhaustion ("languida consurgit nec scit, cur languida surgat"). This line reveals that she is unaware that she is pregnant and hence unaware of the rape; her ensuing question about the nature of her dream in lines 27–28 reveals that she is also unaware of the connection between its symbols and what happened to her while she slept. When Ovid tells the story of the woodpecker and she-wolf some lines later in the narrative, his language recalls that of line 25. In lines 53–54, he refers directly back to the dream's prophetic image of the woodpecker and she-wolf in the form of a rhetorical

question, as we saw above. On the surface, this question seems simply to allude to any reader's previous knowledge of this famous story. The verb *nescit* (line 53), which appears after the caesura in the line, recalls Ovid's earlier description of Rhea Silvia's ignorance of her condition, *nec scit* (line 25), which appears in the same line position.

But aside from simply recalling the earlier line, Ovid's repetition underscores Rhea Silvia's ignorance about the very images of the dream that we see realized in the later history of the twins. Ovid poses his question with a wink to the reader, who has learned about this facet of the story precisely as a result of his or her own reading and interpretation of Rhea Silvia's dream. When Ovid asks "who" does not know about the intervention of the woodpecker and the she-wolf, he draws attention to the reader's knowledge at the expense of the dreamer's ignorance. His question in lines 53–54 also recalls the question "cetera quis nescit?" ("who does not know the rest?") from line 25 of *Amores* 1.5.⁴⁵ In the context of the earlier poem, this teasing question excludes the reader from witnessing the consummation of Ovid's and Corinna's foreplay and instead forces him or her to imagine their intercourse. In the *Fasti*, by contrast, *quis nescit* does not exclude the reader; rather, it alludes to the reader's foreknowledge of this aspect of the twins' story specifically as it was revealed in the dream.

Water and Narrative: Filling the Urn

Ovid bridges the dream and the remainder of Rhea Silvia's story with a reference to the retrieval of her water jug and a confirmation of her pregnancy in lines 39–42. He writes:

Dixerat, et plenam non firmis viribus urnam
sustulit: implerat, dum sua visa refert, 40
interea crescente Remo, crescente Quirino,
caelesti tumidus pondere venter erat.

[She finished speaking, and lifted the full pitcher with faint strength; she had filled the urn while she was recounting her dream. Meanwhile her belly was swollen with a heavenly weight, for Remus was growing, and growing, too, was Quirinus.]

The adverb *interea* that begins the second couplet suggests a temporal connection between the act of filling the urn and Rhea Silvia's burgeoning uterus, thus

confirming her, represented in metonymy here by her uterus, as a vessel for the gestation of the twins. The placement of the nouns *urnam* (39) and *venter* (42), both modified by adjectives that suggest swelling, in similar positions at the end of their respective lines reinforces their metaphorical connection. Ovid's declaration of Rhea Silvia's pregnancy, whose content has been alluded to through the cryptic symbols of her dream, also recalls the earlier revelation of her pregnancy and its implication for the future of Rome ("intra / viscera Romanae conditor urbis erat") from lines 23–24. The allusions to her physical form with the words *viscera* (24) and *venter* (42) bookend the dream and thus highlight the central message conveyed by its symbols. But it is the image of the water jug that adds unity and cohesiveness to the entire presentation of Ovid's story.

Rhea Silvia's attempt to lift the water jug in line 39 is hindered by her weakness ("non firmis viribus"). This connects back via chiasmus to the images in lines 23–26. In line 25, she is weak (*languida*) when she stands up; just prior to this it has been revealed that she is pregnant with Romulus ("iam . . . erat," lines 23–24). The statement of pregnancy that has introduced the dream reveals that a rape has occurred, and that the *semina* of Mars, alluded to in line 10, have been planted. Consonant with the dream image of the soaring trees (*surgunt*) is the statement about the growing twins (*crescente*). Both verbs draw attention to the movement and growth essential to conveying the information of the story and hinting at its continuation beyond this scene. The images of pregnancy and the weakness it causes that appear on either end of the dream highlight Rhea Silvia's weakened state, rather than enlightened vision, after her dream.

The encounter between Mars and Rhea Silvia is often associated with flowing water. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, for example, begins his account of their meeting with a description of the grove to which Ilia had gone to fetch pure water for sacrifice from its spring (1.77.1). In his brief mention of the story, Tibullus describes the location of Mars's cast-off arms as *ad ripas* (2.5.54), suggesting the riverbank as the location for the rape. As we recall, Ennius wrote that Ilia dreamed she had been abducted by an anonymous man through unfamiliar locations, including a riverbank (*Annales* 1.38–39). Of course, water and rivers are motifs common to Rhea Silvia's story, as she will eventually marry or be joined to the Anio or Tiber River, with the latter also playing a significant role in saving the exposed twins later in the story.⁴⁶ In Ovid's *Fasti*, the river and its water also play a prominent role beyond merely providing a motivation for Rhea Silvia's journey and a setting for the rape—in her story, flowing water and narrative are interconnected.

Images of the water jug bookend the rape and dream. The vessel full of water (*plenam urnam*) that she struggles to lift in lines 39–40 is a clear symbol of her full womb, as I have suggested above. Thus the urn filled with water acts as a metaphor

for her as a "vessel" filled with the seed of Rome's founder. Furthermore, the *urnam* of line 39 should recall for the reader the *fictilis urna* of line 14. Earlier in the narrative, the *urna* symbolized the interruption of Rhea Silvia's chaste duty and foreshadowed her shift in position from upright to prostrate. As we recall, she took the urn from her head and placed it on the ground; in the following line she followed suit and sat on the ground, eventually falling into sleep in line 19. Thus Ovid had already offered a physical connection between Rhea Silvia and the urn itself, in addition to suggesting its symbolic importance for her duties as a priestess.

Ovid uses the *dum* clause in line 40 to connect the image of Rhea Silvia filling the vessel (*implerat*) with that of her narrating her dream ("sua visa refert").⁴⁷ This sentence implies a second significance of her action. I suggest that the act of filling the vessel with water also implies the passage of time, since we must assume that the water has been flowing from the river into the urn during her narration of the dream, completing its journey into the urn as the speaker completes her narrative. The image of the vessel first idle and then full is a visual cue for the reader to connect what he or she has actually seen, the rape and its prelude, with what Rhea Silvia has shown the reader in her retelling of the dream. Flowing water is inherently evocative of the passage of time and also the transversal of space, as it suggests both physical passage through a channel and temporal progression from source to terminus. While the growth of the trees within the dreamscape hints symbolically at the dream's aftermath, the growth of the twins, the coincidence of water flowing into the vessel with the narration of the dream reinforces this look to the future by hinting at the process of narration itself.

The connection between the flow of water and the flow of words in speech is not unique to Ovid. Quintilian used the river as a metaphor for speech, comparing speech that flows without interruption to a river flowing unobstructed by rocks (*Inst.* 9.4.7). Prudence Jones has observed that in books 8 and 9 of the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid uses the swelling river Achelous as a stand-in for the narrator himself when the swollen river relays his tales in order to waylay Theseus on his journey (*Met.* 8.577–9.88).⁴⁸ Prior to beginning his narration, Achelous uses the verb *volvare* to describe himself in flood (8.552), but, as Jones notes, this verb can also be used for unrolling a scroll while reading, so perhaps it alludes to his upcoming speech. These examples demonstrate an established association between successful rhetoric and the flow of a river, as well as the river's role as a narrator who captivates a listener with words in a way that parallels the ability to detain a traveler with his flow, as Achelous does with Theseus.

Let us also recall that before falling asleep, Rhea Silvia was lulled by the *murmur aquae* (line 18). This presumably refers to the Tiber flowing past her (rather than into her vessel), but it also reminds us of her obliviousness to the "narrative" being

written while she sleeps. We know that the specific purpose of her trip was to collect water for the sacred rites ("sacra lavaturas mane petebat aquas," line 12), so her inability to collect this water is significant because it symbolizes both interrupted chastity and also an interrupted (and diverted) narrative progression. By becoming a narrator of her own dream, Rhea Silvia redirects the flow of the water into her vessel and, however inadvertently, gains control of her story by presenting her side of it, as Ovid, in his capacity as primary narrator of the poem, allows her to do. While the growth of the trees within the dreamscape hints at the dream's aftermath, the flow of water surrounding the narration of the dream hints at the process of narration itself. The river and its water provide a metaphor for narration as well as a backdrop to the progression of the story.

Sleeper's Dream/Viewer's Image: Textual and Visual Representations of a Scene

Ennius can be credited with inventing Ilia/Rhea Silvia's dream as an internal manifestation of the simultaneously disorienting and terrifying experience of rape.⁴⁹ Rather than foreshadow the rape, the narration of the dream looks back to an event that has just occurred. Ovid distills the terrible premonitions of Ilia's dream into a symbolic visual image, and he abandons Ilia's participation in the dream, casting Rhea Silvia as a viewer. He translates the terror felt by Ilia as she dreams of abduction and wandering on unsure foot into a terrifying prophecy of the results of the rape: a mysterious pregnancy and its dangerous aftermath. In both Ennius and Ovid, the dream is unusual in that it provides the reader with the dreamer's internal perspective on external reality, while also conveying information about future events. In Ovid's poem, Rhea Silvia's symbolic dream of violence reflects the reality of what is happening to her as she dreams, and it communicates a prophecy for the future. Having the full narrative context for the dream in the poem of Ovid's *Fasti* 3 enables us to delve deeply into the connections among the dream's prelude, the dream itself, and the dream's aftermath—that is, between the dream and the present and future "realities" that it encodes.

Consideration of this connection between the simultaneous occurrence of external and internal events is fundamental to thinking about sleepers as dreamers. In particular, the temporal and spatial connection between rape and dream in the Rhea Silvia story draws our attention to the discrepancy between what a sleeper claims to see behind his or her closed eyes while dreaming and the fact that, from the perspective of an outside viewer, the sleeper actually sees nothing. Rhea Silvia's dream and its intimate connection to external circumstances offer us crucial information about how Ovid exploits different modes of viewing in this episode in

order to enhance the reader's own role as a viewer of this scene. Ovid's rendering of this story, which privileges the visual experience of Mars, a feature that is directly connected to the elegiac character of this episode, presents the god and Rhea Silvia as different types of viewers. He is a voyeur, while the mortal experiences an internal, private spectatorship. This dichotomy of viewing experiences is reflected in their respective roles as active aggressor and passive dreamer.

The interaction between waking figures and dreaming sleepers was a popular subject in Roman visual art. Depictions of Bacchus approaching to rescue the sleeping Ariadne adorned the walls of numerous Pompeian homes, and images of Selene visiting her sleeping lover Endymion were frequent choices for sarcophagi (see fig. 22).⁵⁰ In most of these examples, whether the waking figure is actively striding toward the sleeper or more subtly peering at the sleeper's unveiling, the dichotomy between the active waking figure and the passive sleeper is made apparent in the composition of the image. Mars and Rhea Silvia, caught in their moment of opposition between action and passive endurance, although not as popular, appear with some frequency and in diverse time periods in various media, including gems, painting, mosaic, and sculpture.⁵¹ Generally speaking, visual depictions emphasize the eroticism of the scene. The semi-clothed body of Rhea Silvia lies as though anticipating the approach and imminent attack of the arriving Mars. Although their meeting will be violent and brief, unlike the sweetly repetitive union of Selene and Endymion, for example, the suggestion of a sexual encounter is indisputable. The first impression of a viewer unfamiliar with the story might be of a nighttime tryst between lovers. This emphasis upon the eroticism of the scene recalls the prominent elegiac-erotic tone at the opening of *Fasti* 3. In both cases, the eroticism seems misplaced in a story that is primarily about the foundation of a city.

Art historians and literary critics have often noted the coincidence of visual and textual versions of the scene of Mars and Rhea Silvia, but consideration of the two media together rarely moves beyond mere citation of one in the context of a detailed discussion of the other.⁵² With the exception of Michael Koortbojian's 1995 study on myth and meaning in Roman sarcophagi, no analysis has sought to compare techniques for representation in each context. Koortbojian's treatment of the depiction of Rhea Silvia on sarcophagi is particularly sensitive to consideration of her not just as a sleeper—and thus aligned with other sleepers in Roman art, such as Ariadne and Endymion—but also as a dreamer.⁵³ His treatment specifically acknowledges the influence of Ovid's account on subsequent depictions.

In a comparison that moves beyond pointing out iconography shared by visual images and Ovid's tale, Koortbojian includes analysis of viewing dynamics. In particular, he considers the sleeping Rhea Silvia's role as a viewer, commenting,



Figure 22. Rome, Palazzo Doria Pamphili Gallery, detail of marble sarcophagus showing Selene and Endymion. Ca. 230 CE. (Courtesy of the German Archaeological Institute, photo Singer, Neg. D-DAI-Rom 71.1499)

“It is, [therefore,] not the image that *we* see but the one that *she* sees that constitutes the truly significant image of the story and bears the fundamental content of the myth.”⁵⁴ So external viewers of this scene are inspired to envision the content of her dream as they look upon her dreaming, and, in a sense, they dream along with her. Koortbojian claims that a viewer’s familiarity with the story depended on various factors, including “the wide dissemination of the Ovidian version.”⁵⁵ This statement suggests that Ovid’s version not only standardized the physical setting for the rape and the sleeping victim, but also ensured that Rhea Silvia’s dream would be assumed as part of the story. Thus the viewer of sarcophagi depicting the encounter—a snapshot image of Mars and Rhea Silvia—would act like the reader

of Ovid's text by supplying the images of her dream, and hence a vision of the aftermath of this encounter, through his or her own imagination.

Expanding Koortbojian's ideas about the viewer's role, I will consider dynamics of narration and viewing in visual depictions of the scene as a way to comment retrospectively on various aspects of Ovid's visual sensibility as discussed in the previous section. There is no question that he had the precedent of visual images representing Rhea Silvia and other sleepers at his disposal when he created the poem to *Fasti* 3, but I hope to show specifically how he exploited techniques and visual dynamics familiar from artistic representations of sleepers and their viewers in creating his version of the rape and dream. In this way, he demonstrates a poetic sensibility shared by his predecessors Tibullus and Propertius.

Visual Representations of the Encounter

Like the literary accounts, works of visual art depict the encounter of Mars and Rhea Silvia as part of a narrative that often includes the abandonment of the twins and their nurture by the she-wolf. It is generally thought that the story of the god approaching her while she slept was standardized in the Augustan period, as she appears asleep without exception in the art and literature of that period and beyond. This is consistent with another transformation observed around that time, when the taste for continuous narrative gave way to the individual snapshots, so to speak, of important scenes of Rome's foundation, such as the suckling of the twins by the she-wolf.⁵⁶

One of our earliest extant examples of the scene occurs as part of a narrative. The so-called Origins of Rome fresco from the house of Fabius Secundus at Pompeii (fig. 23) is an example of a synoptic narrative, with multiple scenes from the twins' biography depicted on one visual plane.⁵⁷ The chronological progression of the narrative is condensed onto one plane, rather than being arrayed in separate panels that one would "read" in succession, although the progression of time is suggested as viewers move their eyes from top to bottom. Reading the image this way, we see Mars approaching the sleeping Rhea Silvia in the top center; a group of men, possibly the priests of Mars, watching in awe on the left; below them (partially destroyed), Rhea Silvia being punished with death for violating her vow of virginity; and, at the bottom, Mercury showing a female figure the wolf suckling the twins. The synoptic nature of the image allows the viewer to see various parts of the story as an integral whole, ensuring a visual association between the events depicted. Glenda Swan argues that the images below the sleeping figure show scenes from Rhea Silvia's dream. If we follow this interpretation, it would be the sole instance of such a representation.⁵⁸



Figure 23. Pompeii, House of Fabius Secundus, Origins of Rome fresco. Early first century CE. Museo Archeologico di Napoli. (Photo © Scala / Art Resource, NY)



Figure 24. Rome, Columbarium of the Statilli, drawing of fresco showing the encounter between Mars and Rhea Silvia. First century BCE. Museo Nazionale di Roma. (From Brizio 1876, pl. 2)

Another early depiction of this scene within a narrative comes from a painting cycle found in the columbarium of the Statilii on the Esquiline, datable to the years between the eras of Caesar and Augustus.⁵⁹ The encounter formed part of a diachronic narrative along with eleven other scenes depicting the founding of Rome that were arrayed around the interior walls of the columbarium. The remains of these frescoes are poorly preserved and difficult to decipher, but figure 24 shows a drawing of the individual scene of the encounter. Like the *Origins of Rome* fresco, this image shows the scene of Mars and Rhea Silvia as part of a longer visual narrative that included the exposure of the twins, their rescue, and their suckling by the she-wolf. Unlike its counterpart, however, this image shows both Mars and Rhea Silvia upright. There is no question that Mars approaches Rhea Silvia while she is awake in this image, and thus it is unique among extant images of the pair.⁶⁰ Nevertheless, elements of the painting's composition can be profitably compared with other versions of the tale.

Richard Brilliant comments on the columbarium fresco cycle as a visual narrative using "condensed narration" to illustrate key scenes from Rome's origins.⁶¹ He connects the depiction of key recognizable scenes arrayed in a linear sequence around the walls of a room to other known narrative cycles depicting the origins of Rome, such as the reliefs that adorned the Basilica Aemilia.⁶² In the columbarium frescoes, the narrative moves from right to left, starting on the west wall and ending on the north wall. It is generally agreed that of the legible extant paintings, the first two scenes depict the foundation of Alba Longa and the war between the Latins and the Rutuli, respectively. Panels 3 through 5, devoted to Rhea Silvia, covered the length of the east wall. The final two panels on the north wall show the aftermath of the rape: the exposure of the twins and their later role as shepherds.⁶³

Of the three panels that depict Rhea Silvia's story, the central panel of the east wall, the focus of this analysis, stands out from the one it follows and the one it precedes because of the dynamic quality of its figures. The panels on either side show figures seated and congregated as though deliberating; the central panel shows movement that comes to a central focal point with the embrace of Mars and Rhea Silvia (fig. 24). Peter Holliday suggests that the outdoor scene showing their encounter is "balanced" by the two flanking scenes set in the interior of palaces with figures seated on thrones.⁶⁴ The preceding scene has been variously interpreted. Borda identified in it Amulius confronting Rhea Silvia about her pregnancy.⁶⁵ Bernard Andreae understood it to represent Amulius ordering her to become a Vestal, which would fit chronologically with the right-to-left progression.⁶⁶ The third scene in the series likely showed, as Andreae suggested, Amulius confronting and condemning the pregnant Rhea Silvia. Following Andreae's proposals, we can see that this triptych of scenes emphasizes the role of the encounter between Mars and Rhea Silvia as a visual hinge between two static scenes in which her fate is decided for her and she has no active role.

In the scene where Mars and Rhea Silvia meet, they face each other, with additional characters on either side echoing the orientation of the central figures' bodies, as we see in figure 24. To Mars's left reclines a personification of a water source, likely the Tiber, who looks to his left, toward the pair. To Rhea Silvia's right hovers a winged Victory assisting with the removal of the virgin's fillet, according to Holliday's interpretation.⁶⁷ Holliday also notes that in the panel to the left of the central panel—the one that would have followed the central panel in the viewer's "reading"—a seated female figure turns to look back at the central panel.⁶⁸ These compositional features focus the viewer's eye toward the central couple, as the internal viewers provide a model for their external counterparts. Furthermore, the pair seems to be framed by the upward-reaching branches of a tree to Mars's right and the outstretched wings of the Victory to Rhea Silvia's left.

Focusing on the scene's central characters, we see that the poses of Mars and Rhea Silvia are visibly opposed; although both are caught in a moment of forward movement, she is vertically oriented, while his outstretched arms and legs, splayed in a lunge, give him dominance along the horizontal plane. His cape extends behind him to the viewer's left, while her fillet, unwound by Victory, extends horizontally outward in the opposite direction (and in contrast to the posture of her body). While this element serves to balance their forms compositionally, it also creates a sense that the pair has been caught while moving toward one another. Furthermore, the god advances to the left, in direct opposition to the flow of the narrative, suggesting both his intervention in it and his interruption of Rhea Silvia's intended action. One of his outstretched arms extends toward her arm or waist, cutting

across the space between their bodies and possibly indicating his violent possession of her. Despite the fact that they are touching, his gesture and her lack of reciprocation reveal an imbalance between them.

An additional indication of the violence and brevity of their encounter is the object at Rhea Silvia's feet—presumably the water jug that she was carrying in order to retrieve water from the source personified by the reclining figure at the viewer's lower left. This image is one of the few depictions of the pair to show the water jug.⁶⁹ Like the one placed on the ground in Ovid's poem, it reminds the viewer of the interruption of her chaste duty, and thus her chastity itself, by Mars's intervention. The jug in the columbarium painting appears to have been dropped rather than set down in an upright position, a symbol of the violence of Mars's intervention. As Rhea Silvia is waylaid upon her journey to collect water, her story is also interrupted and diverted by the attack of Mars, who stands between her jug and the river to which she was originally bringing it. When we next see the river, in the final legible panel of the series, the twins, the product of the union of Mars and Rhea Silvia, are being borne into it in order to be cast to their deaths. As in Ovid's account in the *Fasti*, the fallen jug represents both the involuntary interruption of Rhea Silvia's autonomous forward journey and the violent end to her avowed chastity.

Even though the scene of Mars accosting Rhea Silvia forms part of a diachronic narrative, the individual scene offers a framed snapshot. As in the *Fasti*, their encounter in the painting is a pivot point that allows the viewer to look back to her loss of chastity and forward to the birth of the twins. Ovid designated this transition by describing the natural elements of the landscape of the grove and using the symbol of the fallen jug as an indication of her interrupted journey and change of direction. These markers are also employed by the painter of the columbarium fresco.

Stasis and Flow on a Mosaic from Ostia

Figure 25 shows a black and white mosaic in a style that is typical of mosaics from Ostia made between the beginning and the middle of the second century CE. It postdates the *Fasti* by more than a century, but its iconography is consistent with snapshot depictions of the moment of the encounter between Mars and Rhea Silvia just before the rape, as we see in the relief panel shown in Figure 26.⁷⁰ The image highlights the similar ways in which a visual artist and a poet enfold into the presentation of this encounter visual cues, or symbols, that inspire a viewer or reader to envision its important consequences. Similarities between visual and textual representation can go beyond mere iconographic

parallels. Here I focus specifically on the role of the dreamer and reader/viewer as interpreters of visual symbols in their engagement with images. This discussion will broaden our understanding of the dream account as similar to ekphrasis in its ability to bring before the eyes of external viewers images not seen, but described.

The Ostia mosaic, 4.32 m by 4.27 m in size, was excavated in the late eighteenth century under the auspices of the Portuguese ambassador.⁷¹ It was found in the vicinity of the building known as the *Magazzino dell'Olio*, a sort of warehouse in the part of the city close to the Tiber, and was removed from its find spot along with many other mosaics, sculptures, and *dolia*. It was installed in the floor of an elegant salon in the Palazzo Altieri, now the office of a bank official. With special permission, the mosaic can still be viewed in this same spot. Lack of documentation from the mosaic's excavation makes it impossible to establish its original viewing context, but having had a chance to study it in its current location, I feel comfortable making the following observations about its composition and appearance, at least to a modern viewer.

An initial survey of the image reveals many physical similarities to the setting of Ovid's poem: the approach of Mars, the recumbent and aloof Rhea Silvia, the overturned water jug suggesting the proximity of the river and reminding the viewer of its bearer's chaste duty, and the trees, which not only recall the setting of a grove for the rape, but also evoke the symbols for Romulus and Remus in the dream. These elements inspired Carlo Pietrangeli in his 1943 analysis of the mosaic to suggest that the image would prompt the viewer to recall Ovid's lines.⁷² But there are many more comparisons to be made, and understanding how these images are deployed in the mosaic to attract the viewer's attention can increase our appreciation of Ovid's visual sensibilities.

The mosaic's central figures assume strikingly contrasting poses. Mars is shown in flight and brandishing weapons; Rhea Silvia is languid and resting on her neglected water jug. However, their postures do more than simply capture the moment of their interaction; rather, they suggest movement and thus hint at the progression of time beyond this encounter. For example, the forward thrust of Mars's advance toward Rhea Silvia in the foreground is evident from the arrangement of his legs as though caught mid-stride, and accentuated by the arcing folds of his fluttering cape. These elements seem to defy the static medium in which they are contained and thus call attention to the fact that this image represents a moment along a continuum rather than a culmination. As in Ovid's account, Mars is here associated with the ethereal, while Rhea Silvia, resting upon her jug, is connected to the earth.

The trees in the mosaic play an important role as boundary markers between the advancing Mars and the stationary Rhea Silvia. The angle of the trees as they



Figure 25. Rome, Palazzo Altieri, mosaic from Ostia showing Mars and Rhea Silvia. Ca. 130–60 CE. (Courtesy of the Gabinetto Fotografico Nazionale)

bend in toward the sleeper creates a protected enclosure around her. The impression of the sleeper's seclusion is enhanced by the appearance of depth created by the black lines connecting the taller tree with the lower frame of the composition.⁷³ Giovanni Becatti observed that Mars in his descent forms a triangle with the left-leaning, taller tree at the viewer's right, while the small tree at the bottom left continues the line of the god's body; the triangle's third edge is formed by the horizontal black line that runs along the bottom of the image.⁷⁴ Mars's helmet forms the apex of this triangle, and its visor is completely in line with the extending branch of the tree on the right, thus aligning the god with the external elements that outline Rhea Silvia's space. But as his body remains above the sleeper, his



Figure 26. Rome, Cortile del Belvedere, Vatican Museums, marble relief depicting Mars descending on Rhea Silvia. Second century CE. (Photo © Vanni Archive / Art Resource, NY)

shield crosses the boundary created by his body and the trees, encroaching upon her space. Perhaps we can see two visual metaphors in this breach of the physical enclosure: a metaphor for the obvious physical violation, and a metaphor for the more subtle violation of her interior world across the boundary of her consciousness, as Mars insinuates himself into her sleep by way of a dream.

Rhea Silvia, in contrast to Mars, at first glance embodies stasis, as she lies asleep with her arms folded atop the jug. In terms of the mosaic's composition, Mars's cape, billowing out behind him to suggest movement and reveal his nude body, contrasts with the complex, protective folds of the sleeper's clothing. Her inaccessibility is observable in her taut garment, which is gathered and pulled in where her legs meet. Its multiple pleats communicate a sense of inviolability that contrasts with the expected accessibility of the sleeper. Yet it appears to fall away just as it reaches her groin, exposing her pubic region. The garment is visible behind her as it hangs below her left side and gathers in a bunch underneath her left arm, but it does nothing to cover her torso. Her right arm, folded across her chest and resting above the water jug as a cushion for her head, conceals her breasts, which would be exposed if she were in the position typical for sleepers, with one arm flung back over her head, as we see in other depictions of her, such as the Belvedere relief (fig. 26) and the Palazzo Mattei sarcophagus (fig. 27).⁷⁵ The arrangement of Rhea Silvia's garment in the mosaic creates an interplay between concealment and exposure while dividing the upper and lower halves of her body. But the balance of hidden and revealed elements is complicated by the placement of her folded arms at the level of her chest, thwarting the anticipated view of her breasts and thus adding a teasing quality to the image's eroticism. The complex arrangement of her arms and hands serves the additional purpose of drawing attention to the sideways water vessel on which they rest.

The presence of the vessel should recall Ovid's *fictilis urna*. Whereas the idle water jug in his account signaled that Rhea Silvia had been interrupted on her way to draw water by the arrival of Mars, in the mosaic image the flow of water from the jug implies that she was interrupted by sleep just *after* filling it, and thus the spilled water becomes a visual metaphor for the sleeper's repose, as it reverses or "undoes" the achievement of her original task.

Like the apparent billowing of Mars's cape, the seemingly inexhaustible flow of water from Rhea Silvia's jug creates the illusion of movement on a static plane. Illusionism is a quality more commonly associated with Hellenistic polychrome mosaics, such as the Roman copy of the Hellenistic artist Sosos's famous "unswept floor," in which the remnants of a meal cast onto the floor are shaded to create the illusion of three-dimensionality, but black and white mosaics were capable of a visual sophistication that is often overlooked.⁷⁶ Although there is a tendency to



Figure 27. Rome, Palazzo Mattei, marble sarcophagus showing Mars and Rhea Silvia. 230–40 CE. (Photo © Alinari / Art Resource, NY)

think of them as a utilitarian counterpart to their Hellenistic predecessors, John Clarke has demonstrated that the artists of this medium established their own methods to achieve visual sophistication. The mosaic artists of the Hadrianic period in particular developed new modes for creating “kinesthetically engaging composition.”⁷⁷ As Clarke shows, “an aesthetics of flow” is created by images of swimming or floating figures who appear to move about a watery space.⁷⁸ With a “kinesthetic address” to their viewers,⁷⁹ the composition of these mosaics and the varied orientation of their figures encouraged viewers to move around the perimeter and see the images from different perspectives. The illusion of movement, albeit by the figures in the mosaic rather than by its viewers, is creatively suggested in the Palazzo Altieri mosaic by the presence of moving elements such as Mars’s cape and the flowing water.

Perhaps, as Pietrangeli suggests, the jug merely represents the presence of the river from which Rhea Silvia drew the water.⁸⁰ Figure 28 shows a relief panel from the Ara Pacis Augustae on which the overturned water jug among river reeds at the bottom left clearly symbolizes a river, an identification bolstered by the presence of reeds and a water fowl above it. On the Ara Pacis relief the overturned jug works in tandem with other symbols to suggest a river, but personifications of river gods and river nymphs were often depicted holding sideways a water jug that represented the flow of their waters, as we see in the fresco from Pompeii in figure 29. Thus it is likely that the artist of the Ostia mosaic had in mind the familiar imagery of river deities as he created his version of Rhea Silvia lying on an overturned



Figure 28. Rome, Ara Pacis Augustae, marble relief showing Peace or Tellus. 13–9 BCE. (Photo © Album / Art Resource, NY)



Figure 29. Pompeii, fresco depicting a river god with water jug. First century BCE. Musée du Louvre, Paris. (Photo © Gianni Dagli Orti / The Art Archive at Art Resource, NY)

jug.⁸¹ Acknowledgment of this paradigm does not, however, exclude additional ways of interpreting the presence of the overflowing jug in the context of this specific composition.

In its new context, the overflowing urn performs a dual function: it both marks Rhea Silvia's location beside the river and suggests the scene's relevance for the future. The water flowing copiously from the overturned jug conveys a sense of inevitability and passivity as Mars makes his easy approach, and thus it could remind the viewer of her chastity, about to seep away, no longer contained by an unviolated body. The water may also represent Rhea Silvia as a source both for her immediate offspring and, ultimately, for the Roman *gens*. Water deities are linked with fertility in visual art: like the female figures flanking the central seated figure on the panel of the Ara Pacis (fig. 28) who clearly depicts abundance and fecundity, Rhea Silvia is a symbol of fertility in this mosaic. Finally, the flow of water from the jug in the mosaic hints at the continuation of the narrative and the implications of this scene for the future, not only for the eventual revelation of the significance of this encounter, but for the growth of Rome and its expansion over time. The progression of time is suggested by the movement of Mars, who seems to be approaching Rhea Silvia from afar and is caught at the moment that he breaches her protected and peaceful slumber. This breaking of boundaries is mirrored in the movement of the water over the rim of her water jug and away from her body. In both cases, boundary-crossing symbolizes forward movement, suggesting a progression from Mars to Rhea Silvia to the future, when their threatened offspring will be saved by and, in a sense, reborn from the water of the Tiber itself.

Sleeping figures are inherently mysterious, primarily because when we observe them we are aware that behind a sleeper's opacity lives the vibrant world of dreams that contain important but inaccessible information. As Jean Sorabella has argued, this awareness creates a sense of enthrallment and wonder within the sleep watcher depicted gazing at the sleeper.⁸² The role of sleep watcher is easily transferred to the external viewer, especially when he or she has the advantage of viewing the sleeper frontally, as in the case of the Ostia mosaic, whereas Mars is at a disadvantage in terms of his perspective on her. In the Ostia mosaic (as with all depictions of the encounter between Mars and Rhea Silvia), the viewer is in the privileged position of knowing what is about to happen to the sleeper during her sleep, and that awareness of the imminent union between the figures he or she sees contrasts with the sleeper's oblivion. Rhea Silvia's lack of awareness is communicated by the position of her body: she is turned away from her attacker toward the front plane of the image, yet she confronts the external viewer with closed eyes, unaware of him or her as well.

This duality of viewing perspectives should remind us of the reader's dual views of Rhea Silvia's experience in the *Fasti*, where Ovid narrates Mars's approach and rape of the unwitting Rhea Silvia in the third person and then reveals her internal perspective on the events of her sleep in a first-person account. This transition is paralleled in microcosm by the third-person declaration that she is unaware of the reason for her gravid state (lines 25–26), and her related first-person admission of confusion about the dream's meaning in the following couplet (lines 27–28), the preface to her dream description. As we recall from Ovid's version, her metamorphosis from chaste virgin priestess to mother is paralleled by her transformation from viewed object to viewer herself. In contrast to Ovid's account, in which the reader is privileged to have both an external and an internal perspective upon the rape, the mosaic offers no hint about the dreamer's vision. Instead, as Koortbojian suggests, its viewer is prompted by her opacity and the knowledge that sleep is temporary to think of the aftermath of the encounter he or she witnesses, which in Ovid's tale is encoded in the images of the dream.

We might say that the viewer of the mosaic "dreams" *on behalf of* the sleeper, while the reader of Ovid's poetry "dreams" *along with* her, afforded in both cases a privileged perspective that the sleeper herself lacks. Furthermore, the external viewer of the mosaic, much like the reader of Ovid's poem, becomes an interpreter of visual symbols, using them to create a narrative of the outcomes of this scene for which their bearer will have to endure a long gestation, a controversial parturition, and subsequent elision from the story.

Conclusion

When a viewer, awake, tries to imagine a sleeper's dream, the effort points out an inherent paradox: the privilege of knowing a sleeper's dream is inaccessible to anyone but the sleeper. The exclusivity of sleep is expressed neatly by the experience of the tormented young girl Byblis in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (9.450–665). Consumed by desire for her brother, Byblis laments the societal constraints that prevent their union. In her role as a lover resenting the circumstances that separate her from her beloved, she shares characteristics with both the lover-narrator of Ovid's *Amores* and the heroines of his *Heroides*.⁸³ Aware that her brother would likely reject her advances if she spoke to him directly, Byblis retreats into realms in which expression of her love is permissible: dreams and letters.

Byblis designates the dream as a space for the expression of things it is not permissible to say aloud, and in so doing she articulates the ultimate paradox of the dreamer's situation. She begins her monologue distraught and confused about a dream that has allowed her to consummate her love for her brother (lines 469–71).

In describing the dream, Ovid draws a contrast between what Byblis would dare to do while awake (*vigilans*) and what she experiences in her dream ("placida resolute quiete," line 469). She repeats this dichotomy between waking and sleeping in her own summary of the dream experience. As she reveals in lines 479–81 of her monologue, dreams contrast with waking reality because they are purely internal experiences: "dummodo tale nihil vigilans committere temptem, / saepe licet simili redeat sub imagine somnus / testis abest somno, nec abest imitata voluptas" ("If only when I am awake I do not attempt to commit such an act, still may sleep often return with such a dream! There are no witnesses in sleep, nor is there any lack of simulated pleasure"). Although Byblis rejoices that there are no witnesses to dreams, so that one can express feelings that could not otherwise be shared, she also reveals that dreams have no currency outside the internal experience of the dreamer, and this leaves her searching for another mode for expressing her desire for her brother. Paradoxically, a dream is only "real" to the dreamer, even if it includes the illusion of the presence and participation of other people, when it is being experienced by the dreamer alone and to the exclusion of all others. The only way to let another person share the experience of a dream is to describe it, and at that point it is at one remove from the dreamer's primary experience.

In addition to dreaming, Byblis finds release from the taboo against expressing her incestuous desire by writing a letter to her brother. Newlands compares her to the writer whose voice is suppressed and who reacts to this oppression by putting his subversion into writing.⁸⁴ This is similar to the situations of the heroines of the *Heroides*, particularly Phaedra (*Her.* 4), who records incestuous desires that would otherwise be dangerous to articulate verbally. In Byblis's story there is an explicit connection between dreaming and letter writing as venues for subverting societal norms and expectations, but the results are distinctly different. The dream is an escape to a realm where there are no witnesses; because the letter is intended for reading by its addressee, its displacement of the act of direct speech is only temporary. Even though the communication in a letter can take place across spatial and temporal distance, it is ultimately a form of communication close to speech. In Byblis's case, when the sentiments expressed in her letter meet unequivocal rejection, the result is a complete deprivation of speech: she is turned into a spring gushing with tears.

Rhea Silvia does not write. Instead, Ovid establishes her subjectivity in the narrative through a very specific form of communication: the reaction to and description of a dream. Although she and Byblis both reveal the content of their dreams, their experiences are completely different. Whereas Byblis enjoys her dream and knows exactly how it contrasts with reality, Rhea Silvia wakes confused, unsure whether what she has seen was actually a dream and having no understanding of

its relevance to her waking life. But her story illustrates an aspect of the interiority of dreaming that complements Byblis's revelation about dreaming. As Newlands writes, Byblis "becomes a figure of the artist, who, like her, can express *nefanda* through writing, the displaced medium of direct speech."⁸⁵ In retelling the dream, Rhea Silvia's dream description becomes "the displaced medium" of direct viewing, and in this way it complements the act of writing because it is a way of representing an experience in which the audience has no way of participating.

We can apply the connection between Byblis and the poet to Rhea Silvia's situation. As I have argued above, by assuming first-person narration from the poet, Rhea Silvia becomes Ovid's proxy. When she reveals her dream and her subjective response to it, she engages in an action that is typical for the elegiac poet-narrator, who recounts his dream and reveals some aspect of his emotional response without providing any interpretation of its significance for the reader.

Rhea Silvia's expression of uncertainty in line 28 ("an somno clarius illud erat?") hints at another aspect of the dreamer's paradox, one that complements Byblis's acknowledgment of dreams as realms of safety from scrutiny. When Rhea Silvia asks whether she has seen a vision clearer than a dream—that is, a waking vision—she implies that if this experience was something other than an internal dream, its existence could possibly be corroborated by another witness. By questioning the type of image she has seen, Rhea Silvia conveys her uncertainty about trusting what she has seen and relying upon it to portend something positive ("utile sit faustumque, precor," line 27). The very fact that delights Byblis, the lack of witnesses to a dream, terrifies Rhea Silvia, because she is left alone to ponder the images of the dream but seems no wiser about their meaning after articulating them aloud. The exclusivity of the dream experience is for Rhea Silvia a hindrance to her credibility, for if she is unable to vouch for the meaning of her dream, she will be unable to argue for the divine parentage or future glory of her sons.⁸⁶

Koortbojian argues that the viewer's engagement with visual images of Rhea Silvia hinged upon an implicit relationship between artist and viewer.⁸⁷ The viewer's knowledge that the encounter depicted was merely a catalyst for the birth of Rome's founder encouraged him or her to imagine the important aftermath of the figures' union while looking at the moment just prior to it. Awareness of the literary accounts of Rhea Silvia's prophetic dream about her future sons also inspired the viewer to imagine her dreaming this dream, and therefore engage in the process of envisioning her dream himself or herself. Visual images of Rhea Silvia provide an instance in which spectatorship and narration converge.

As we have seen in the proem to *Fasti* 3, Ovid re-creates the image of the sleeping Rhea Silvia like a visual tableau to lure his viewer (Mars) into his poem, and Mars, acting upon this visual stimulation, enters the poem as bidden and

immediately engages in viewing. In this way, Ovid acts like a visual artist creating a work to engage potential viewers. Of all of the extant accounts of the rape of Rhea Silvia by Mars, Ovid's is the most extensive and, more importantly, the only one that plays specifically upon dynamics of viewing that are consistent in artistic representations of the tale. By making Rhea Silvia a first-person narrator, he makes her a proxy for the author himself. He creates the dream, but she brings it to life for the reader through her own description. In creating a dream that itself encodes an act of creativity (the conception and gestation of the twins), Ovid displays his creative skills as a poet while enriching his presentation with allusion to techniques and effects familiar from works of visual art in his portrayal of the dream.

In the context of the *Annales*, the poet Ennius and his character Ilia are connected through their dreams.⁸⁸ Catherine Connors observes that through his dream of Homer, the poet makes a statement about his creative force as a poet.⁸⁹ Ennius is thus able to "give birth to" epic poetry in the Latin language; likewise, Ilia dreams of conceiving and giving birth to the twins, one of whom will found Rome. This parallel is to some extent relevant to the *Fasti* passage, for as Rhea Silvia dreams of Rome's founders while conceiving them, so too is Ovid preparing in his prologue to tell the story of Rome's founders (of which Rhea Silvia's dream is a microcosm).

Connors perceives a major difference between the two versions in the fact that Ovid foregrounds Rhea Silvia's ignorance of what she has seen.⁹⁰ As Connors points out, Ovid appeals to the reader by doing this, and the reader in turn takes up the burden of decoding the symbols that Rhea Silvia is unable to decipher. I have argued that by engaging the reader in particular as a viewer of the dream, Ovid capitalizes upon the dream's similarity to a work of visual art, and its description as a type of ekphrasis. The viewer's response to Rhea Silvia's dream is likely to be one of interpretation, since he or she would be familiar with her story and thus able to decode its symbols as relevant to the future of Rome. The viewer's role as interpreter is a direct foil for the dreamer's inability to offer such a response. Like a work of visual art created to engage viewers, the dream—created by the poet, but articulated by his proxy within the text—demands interpretation by the reader.

It is almost a commonplace of criticism to claim that we can identify Ovid with the artists of his poetry, such as Arachne and Pygmalion in the *Metamorphoses*.⁹¹ If Ovid acts like a visual artist in creating the image of Rhea Silvia asleep in the grove so that he can entice Mars (and the reader) with his alluring visual tableau, then Rhea Silvia appropriates the poet's role as artist when she gives voice to her dream in a narration that brings to life a series of images she has witnessed while sleeping. She may appear like a work of visual art to Mars as he approaches her asleep, just as Cynthia does to Propertius in poem 1.3, but in her telling of her

dream, she usurps the role of elegiac narrator. Like the narrators of Propertius 2.26a and *Amores* 3.5, she dreams in symbols of a scene that frightens her and in the face of which she feels marginalized and helpless. Furthermore, she recounts the dream to the reader alone, denying any other character in the text a chance to interpret or react to the prophecy she has received. Rhea Silvia reveals in symbolic microcosm the events to come in the narrative, and thus she conveys, albeit unwittingly, an omniscience like that of the author.



Conclusion

Ut Pictura Somnium

The analogy between a dream and a work of visual art may seem obvious or even clichéd, especially to a modern reader familiar with, for example, the Surrealist painters of the early twentieth century, who sought to translate the bizarre quality of dream images to canvas.¹ Perhaps not surprisingly, explicit comparisons between dreams and works of visual art are scarce among Greek and Roman authors, and yet, as I have suggested in this book, there is much to be gained by comparing the two. I began this book with a couplet from Propertius 3.8 that draws a parallel between dreaming and looking at a painted image through observation of the similar reactions these experiences elicit from a girl in love. By way of reviewing the book's central arguments, let us look briefly at another context in which this parallel is articulated.

At the conclusion of Plato's dialogue the *Sophist*, we find the central characters, the Eleatic visitor and Theaetetus, discussing divine and human production. In section 266a, the visitor divides divine and human production into two types: the art of producing things themselves (αὐτοποιητική) and that of producing images of those things (εἰδωλοποιική). After listing some products of divine creation, which include real things, such as human beings, and their accompanying images, such as those seen in dreams, which are created by "daemoniac contrivance" (δαιμονία . . . μηχανῇ), the visitor poses the following questions about human production (266c): τί δὲ τὴν ἡμετέραν τέχνην; ἂρ' οὐκ αὐτὴν μὲν οἰκίαν οἰκοδομικῇ φήσομεν ποιεῖν, γραφικῇ δὲ τιν' ἑτέραν, οἷον ὄναρ ἀνθρώπινον ἐγρηγορόσιν ἀπειργασμένην; ("And what is our art? Shall we not say a house itself is made by the art of building, and, by the art of painting another (house), like a man-made dream fashioned for those who are awake?").² The visitor's question maintains the dichotomy between real and image, while translating the subject matter from divine creation to the human arts of building and painting.

The primary implication of the simile at the end of the visitor's question is that both fashioning a dream and making a painting are creative acts, distinguished by their creators. The former is done by the gods; the latter, by human artists. In its immediate context, the dream simile has a direct connection to the earlier mention of dreams as divinely produced: the gods create actual dreams as "images" of real things, but humans create images, such as paintings of real things, that are, in turn, "dreamlike." Taken on its own, however, Plato's simile prompts us to think more generally about the similarity between dreams and paintings as types of images. Teasing out the simile's implications, we can say that what links dreams and paintings is their ability to represent something real through the creation of an image (εἰδωλοποιική), and that this image is recognizable as, but clearly distinct from, the object (man or house) it seeks to represent.³ In other words, both dream image and painted image engage in mimesis, and the effectiveness of both types of image hinges on their successful illusionism.

Dream image and painted image are comparable not only because of their similar relationship to their referents, but also because of their similar effects upon the viewers for whom these images are created. Plato's simile implies that for a painting to achieve the effect of a waking dream, it must engage its waking viewers (ἐγρηγορόσιν) in the way that a dream engages the sleeping dreamer. Thus we can assume that the painting of a house is "dreamlike" because it is perceived by its viewer as a dream is perceived by a dreamer—that is, as a representation of something real. By mentioning the waking viewers of the painting, the speaker implies the similar perspective of (sleeping) dreamers and (waking) viewers on works of visual art. The viewer of the painted image of a house will be like a dreamer dreaming: each looks at an image that presents only the appearance of reality rather than the real object itself.

Plato's simile locates the similarity between dream and painting not in the capacity of both to represent images that counter reality (as in Surrealist painting, for example), but rather in their ability to produce images that reflect the visible reality of the dreamer's waking world. I choose this excerpt from Plato's *Sophist* to conclude this book because, in casting the dream as a representation of reality specifically from the perspective of its viewer, Plato's simile emphasizes something fundamental about the dreamer as a type of viewer. In particular, his distinction between real and representation by way of the simile of the dream focuses our attention on *how* the image of a dream is perceived by a dreamer in addition to *what* a dream conveys. An attempt to understand the dreamer's role in distinguishing between real and representation and articulating this distinction as he or she shifts from viewer to narrator of the dream—the next steps in the process suggested by Plato's simile—has been at the core of my inquiry.

This book has presented an analysis of the episode dreams (as opposed to the epiphany/message dreams) from Roman elegy through the lens of the dreamer's experience as a viewer of his or her dream. I have demonstrated the different ways in which the authors Tibullus, Propertius, and Ovid craft their dream accounts to convey the visual experience of dreaming, particularly through the use of *enargeia*, the rhetorical term for vividness, deployed to engage the reader of the dream description as though he or she were a viewer of the dream itself. A detailed analysis of the language used to describe dreams, such as the standard idiom of *videre* in the passive voice and the use of words that suggest aspects of physical appearance, has drawn attention to some shared features of the otherwise diverse dream descriptions in Roman elegiac poetry. Comparison with rhetorical techniques such as simile and ekphrasis has demonstrated how the dream description, like these, functions as a verbal image.⁴ As a simile relates to its referent, the dream contains images that correlate, in sometimes tenuous ways, to elements in the dreamer's waking world; as with ekphrasis, the dream description provides a commentary upon the experience of viewing these images.

It is impossible to experience a dream unless one has dreamed it, just as it is impossible to see a work of art unless one looks at it with one's own eyes. The process of description, however, whether the retelling of a dream or an ekphrasis of a work of art, allows a reader or listener to have a secondary experience of the image in question. But the reader or listener in this capacity will only ever know the image through the subjective perspective of the narrator, articulated through the narrator's description of the things he or she has seen and how they appeared to him or her. These two facets of the dream experience are necessarily melded in the dreamer's description of the dream. In this book I have argued that the evocative descriptions of dreams and fantasies of the corpus of Roman elegiac poetry underscore the difficulty of translating the images of a dream into textual terms, by bringing to the fore the tensions inherent in certain types of visual representation and the viewer's responses to these. In demonstrating how the narrator of a dream conveys his or her experience in textual terms, these episodes give us special insight into the fundamental dualism of the elegiac narrator, witnessed in the moment of transition between introspection and exhibition that characterizes the elegiac subject. We can read the first-person dreams and fantasies of elegy as meditations upon the intersections between illusion and reality, between author and persona, and between permanence and loss that in the end constitute the central preoccupations of Roman elegiac poetry.

Notes

INTRODUCTION

1. I follow the text of Goold 1990 for this elegy.
2. Note that editors disagree on the reading of line 13. Barber (1960) prints: “custodum gregibus circa se stipat euntem.” Goold’s (1990) suggested reading of *seu* in line 13 (after Heinsius) strengthens the parallel between the couplets in lines 13–14 and 15–16. The juxtaposition of these two sets of *seu* clauses suggests two distinct sets of opposites. Heyworth (2007b [after Butrica]) prints the following for line 13: “custodum grege si circa se stipat euntem.”
3. Heyworth and Morwood (2011) ad loc. suggest that each line refers to an unspecified (and different) *mulier*.
4. Richardson (1977) ad loc. suggests that she may have encountered a painting of a tragic mythological heroine on display in a shop or gallery.
5. See Renberg 2010 for a survey of some of these inscriptions. He has tallied nearly 450 inscriptions (of a total of 1,300) that refer unambiguously to dreams through phrases such as those cited above.
6. See Harris 2009, esp. ch. 1.
7. Compare *Aen.* 3.147–71, the appearance of the Penates to Aeneas (“effigies sacrae divum Phrygiique penates, / quos mecum ab Troja mediisque ex ignibus Urbis / extuleram, *visi* ante oculos *astare* iacentis / in somnis multo manifesti lumine,” 148–51), and *Aen.* 8.31–65, Aeneas’s vision of Tiberinus (“huic deus ipse loci fluvio Tiberinus amoeno / populeas inter senior se *attollere* frondes / *visus*,” 31–33).
8. Horsfall 2008 ad loc. He cites additional examples from Vergil and Ennius. Cf. his note at 3.174 (Horsfall 2006) for additional examples from several Roman authors.
9. For the relationship of this poem to the image of Patroclus’s ghost, see M. Hubbard 1974, 150–52; Papanghelis 1987, 146; Hutchinson 2006, 170. Homer writes that Patroclus’s ghost bore a strong resemblance to his living appearance: ἦλθε δ’ ἐπὶ ψυχῇ Πατροκλήος δειλοῖο, / πάντ’ αὐτῷ μέγεθος τε καὶ ὄμματα κάλ’ ἐῖκυϊα, / καὶ φωνήν, καὶ τοῖα περὶ χροῖ ἐῖματα ἔστο (*Il.* 23.65–67).
10. Cf. *Il.* 23.99–101.
11. Harris 2009, 53–54.
12. Propertius 4.7.7–12:
eosdem habuit secum quibus est elata capillos,
eosdem oculos; lateri uestis adusta fuit,

et solitum digito beryllon adederat ignis,
 summaque Lethaeus triuerat ora liquor.
 spirantisque animos et uocem misit: at illi
 pollicibus fragiles increpuere manus.

13. The classification of dreams by type has its origin in ancient sources. Penelope, for example, divides dreams between false and true, depending upon the gate through which they travel from the Underworld, in Homer, *Od.* 19.563–67, while the second-century CE dream-interpreter Artemidorus (*Oneirocritica* 1.1) distinguishes between prophetic dreams (*oneiroi*) and dreams that reflect the dreamer's present state (*enhyphnia*).

14. Harris 2009, 23. Harris uses the term “episode” to distinguish between ancient dreams (epiphanies) and modern dreams (episodes). Later in his chapter (48–49), Harris lists classification terms used by previous scholars of dreams, such as “external” vs. “internal”; “objective” vs. “subjective”; “message” vs. “symbolic.”

15. See Harris 2009, ch. 1, esp. 46–49, on false distinctions between terms such as “internal/external” and “subjective/objective” as applied to epiphany/message and episode dreams.

16. Major studies include, on Latin epic, Stearns 1927; Grillone 1967; Bouquet 2001; and Kessels 1978 on Homer. On Latin epic, see also Berlin 1994; Steiner 1952 on the *Aeneid*; Kragelund 1976 on the dreams of Aeneas and Turnus in the *Aeneid*. Another genre-specific analysis is Devereaux 1976 on Greek tragedy. Other studies limit their focus to a specific culture (e.g., van Lieshout 1980 on Greek attitudes) or time period (e.g., Cox Miller 1994 on late antiquity).

17. Bouquet 1996. For a similar approach limited to Propertius, Tibullus, and the Tibullan corpus, see Gendre Loutsch and Jacobi 1997.

18. J. Clarke 2003.

19. Dufallo 2007, ch. 4. On Propertius 4.7, see also Warden 1980; Dimundo 1990.

20. Flaschenriem 2010. See also Wiggers 1980.

21. See Raucci 2011, intro, for a recent discussion.

22. See Valladares 2005 on Propertius's complex evocation of visual art in this poem.

23. M. Hubbard 1974, 157–69.

24. M. Hubbard 1974, 164.

25. Boucher 1965, 41–64.

26. Boucher 1965, 61–62.

27. Grüner (2004, 165–293) presents a variation on this approach in which he discusses the poetry of Catullus and Tibullus in light of the changes in contemporary wall painting in the first century BCE.

28. Leach 1988, 23.

29. Quintilian, *Inst.* 6.2.32: “non tam dicere videtur quam ostendere”; see also 8.3.66. For analysis of *enargeia* in Greek rhetorical handbooks and in Quintilian, see Webb 2009. For discussion of vividness (*enargeia*) in Aristotle, see Sheppard 2014, 22–27. For a survey of ancient theories on *enargeia* applied to Hellenistic literature, see Otto 2009. Bussels

2012, ch. 2, considers ancient discussions of *enargeia* specifically in regard to the concept of the animated image.

30. Leach 1988, 23.

31. The primary source for the application of gaze theory to cinema is Mulvey 1975.

32. See Fredrick 2002 for a variety of approaches to the study of the gaze in Roman culture, and Salzman-Mitchell 2005 for an application of gaze theory to Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.

33. Greene 1998, 82.

34. O'Neill 2005.

35. Raucci 2011.

36. This is how the term is generally used in criticism. Webb 2009 is excellent for an understanding of the term's broad application in antiquity in comparison with its more restricted modern usage. The bibliography on ekphrasis in Greek and Roman texts is extensive; several studies of individual ekphrases and more general theoretical discussions are cited throughout this book. For a recent treatment of ekphrasis in Latin literature, see Dufallo 2013.

37. Bartsch 1989, ch. 3. Cf. Morales 2004, ch. 2 and 182–84.

38. Whitmarsh 2002, 112.

39. See Elsner 1995, 2007a; for specific discussions of ekphrasis, see Elsner 2004a; Bartsch and Elsner 2007. On elegiac poetry specifically, see Elsner 2007c.

40. Elsner 2007c, 20.

41. See Becker 1995 on the shield ekphrasis.

42. Becker 1995, 127. Becker observes in his epilogue (151), for example, that “in responding to representations, the Shield encourages us to respect the particular and peculiar virtues of the image; it enters the illusion of the image, but at the same time admires its mediating qualities.”

43. Bartsch and Elsner 2007, vi. This echoes the ideas of Krieger 1992, for example. The bibliography on ekphrasis in classical texts alone is extensive; Bartsch and Elsner 2007 provides a comprehensive summary of some of the major approaches.

44. Elsner 2007c, 21.

45. Fowler 1991, 29. As Whitmarsh (2002, 117) explains, “by ‘linearizing’ he [Fowler] means transcribing from a visual to a textual-descriptive register.”

46. Farrell 2012, esp. 17–23.

47. Barchiesi 2001, 31.

48. Barchiesi 2001, 32.

49. Barchiesi 2001, 32.

50. P. A. Miller 2004, 4.

51. For a brief discussion, see Gallop 1996 ad loc.; Platt 2011, 258.

52. Guidorizzi 2013, 203.

53. Lieshout 1980, 18–19.

54. See, for example, Wiggers 1980; Walde 2001, 239–43; Flaschenriem 2010.

CHAPTER 1. DREAM DESCRIPTION AND
VISUAL EXPERIENCE IN LATIN POETRY

1. Dodds 1951, 105. Harris (2009, 16), in his list of thirteen features shared by ancient and modern dreams, cites research into the neurological and physiological aspects of dreaming that supports the primacy of vision over the other senses in dream reports (items 8 and 9). See Platt 2011, 253–58, for a discussion of the Greek sources on the visual nature of dreams, with relevant bibliography.

2. Björck 1946, for example, compiles many instances from Greek literature. See also Kessels 1978, 194–207.

3. Prier 1989, 40.

4. Prier 1989, 60; see also 38–42, 56–64, on the distinction between the verbs. The two verbs are sometimes used in direct opposition, according to Chantraine 1968–74, 290, s.v. δοκέω.

5. Platt 2011, 56–57.

6. Lieshout 1980, 26.

7. Lieshout 1980, 27.

8. Text and translation from Edmonds 1922.

9. OLD s.v. *videre* 1 and 20. For discussion of the verb *videre* and other Latin verbs meaning “to see” such as *tueri*, see Guiraud 1964. Guiraud is principally interested in differences of aspect among the verbs with this meaning. While he has ample discussion of the active voice, he presents no analysis of *videre* in the passive. His study is helpful, however, for understanding the difficulty of classifying *videre* because of its multiple meanings (see esp. 48–51).

10. OED s.v. “appear,” 1, 10, and 11.

11. One exception is Propertius 2.26a, which introduces the dream with the verb *vidi*, a point upon which I elaborate in chapter 3.

12. Renberg 2010, esp. 35.

13. Cf. Cicero, *Acad.* 2.25.81: “videsne navem illam? Stare nobis videtur, at iis, qui in nave sunt, moveri haec villa.” In this example, which comes from a debate about Epicurus’s ideas about the reliability of the senses, the active verb *vides* refers to the act of looking with the eye, while *videtur* refers to the mind’s perception caused by optical illusion. The first refers to the objective act of locating an object in space, while the second refers to the perception caused by this act of looking.

14. Godwin 1986 ad loc.

15. Many commentators remark upon the difficulty of lines 418–19. Leonard and Smith (1942) print the text without *et* at the end of line 418. Bailey (1947) and Godwin (1986) print *et* as above. See also Howard 1961, 153–54, for discussion of the interpretive problems.

16. The verbs *videantur* and *tuimur* are used with similar contrast in lines 448–49.

17. Leonard and Smith (1942 ad 457) write that “*censemus* is hardly more than a variant for *videmur*.” But there is a difference between the verbs in context: *videmur* is self-reflexive, as it refers to the dreamer’s own vision of himself, whereas (*cernere*) *censemus* refers to the

perception of something other than the self in the dream, namely sun and daylight. Cf. Ovid, *Her.* 19.199–200 (Hero’s dream of a dolphin, which presages Leander’s death): “hic ego ventosas nantem delphina per undas / cernere non dubia sum mihi visa fide.”

18. Throughout the book, dreams are equated with false images created in the imagination: the hallucinations of madmen and the delusions of the drunk, for example, at *Acad.* 2.47–48 and 2.88–91.

19. For this passage I use the text of Rackham (1933) and follow his translation, with some modifications.

20. Cf. Lucretius, *DRN* 1.117–26.

21. This distinction is reinforced in the final line of section 51, where seeing (contained in the participle *visa*) is contrasted with doing (*gessimus*). Thus the opposition between vision and action reflects that between untrustworthy and reliable experience.

22. For extensive analysis of this dream, see Kragelund 1976; for dreams in the *Aeneid* generally, see Grillone 1967; Bouquet 2001; Walde 2001.

23. On the intertextual relationship between these lines, see Hardie 1993a, 102–3; Horsfall 2008 ad loc.

24. An additional example of the epiphany dream is the hero’s vision of Tiberinus in *Aen.* 8.31–65. See in particular *Aen.* 8.31–33: “huic deus ipse loci fluvio Tiberinus amoeno / populeas inter senior se attollere frondes / visus.”

25. See Austin 1963 ad loc.

26. Grillone 1967, 36n1. Cf. Perkins (1986, 186, 189), who makes a similar argument about the use of *videtur* in Aeneas’s visions of the Penates and of Apollo in book 3. In Perkins’s analysis, in which she applies the narrative theories of L. Doležal to epiphanies and dreams in epic poetry, the verb can imply a “subjective modality” or a “modal conditionality.”

27. See Pease 1935, note ad 460 (*voces*).

28. Pease (1935 ad loc.) suggested that these lines could represent either a dream or a waking vision, claiming that either way, the use of *visa* indicated “that these lines deal with a subjective fantasy”; Krevans (1993, 267n36) argues that “the incongruity of *visa* (4.461) in fact emphasizes that she does not see Sychaeus, but only hears his voice.”

29. Krevans 1993, 266–68; see 266–67n33 for previous studies linking these two dreams.

30. Skutsch 1985, 194.

31. Ovid’s treatment of the story of Ilia’s dream and rape in the *Fasti*, his elegiac poem on Rome’s calendar of festivals and religious holidays, is the focus of chapter 5.

32. Krevans (1993, 267n36) compares “the voice of the unseen dead relative” to Sychaeus’s voice seeming to emanate from his cenotaph in *Aen.* 4.460–61.

33. This is also Aeneas’s reaction to the vanishing ghost of Creusa at *Aen.* 2.792–94, where she is compared to a dream (“volucrique simillima somno,” line 794).

34. For discussion of Quintus’s statement about the *Annales* in its larger context within the *De Divinatione*, see Elliott 2013, 186–89.

35. See Johnston 2010, 74, for connections between Ovid’s account and descriptions of lychnomantic spells in the Greek magical papyri.

36. For a discussion of the role of vision in the *Aeneid* and visual perspectives in the epic, including some discussion of the verbs used, and dreams and ekphrasis, see R. A. Smith 2005.

37. Vergil's use of *credas* (8.691) is comparable to those cited above.

38. Putnam 1998, 147.

39. Putnam 1998, 147.

40. Fordyce 1977 ad loc.

41. Putnam 1998, 36.

42. Austin 1971 ad loc., referring to the commentaries of Conington (1884, 4th ed.) and Conway (1935).

43. See Fowler 1991, 31n40, for bibliography on the passage. To this list we can add Putnam 1998, ch. 1; R. A. Smith 2005.

44. The juxtaposition of *miranda* and *videntur* in line 494 may recall the juxtaposition of *miratur* (describing Aeneas marveling at the craftsmanship of the temple) and *videt* (which introduces his viewership of the mural) in line 456.

45. Many scholars doubt that this poem was written by Ovid. See McKeown 2002 for persuasive arguments against the poem's authenticity, and cf. Kenney 1969. Tronchet 1999 and Walde 2001, 314–20, argue for Ovidian authorship.

46. Ingleheart and Radice 2011, 55.

47. Tronchet (1999) points out the features that this poem shares with dreams in epic poetry.

48. McKeown 2002, 123.

49. McKeown 2002, 128.

50. Ingleheart and Radice 2011, 55.

51. Ingleheart and Radice 2011, 56.

52. Hinds 2002, 136–40.

53. Walde 2001, 319n17.

54. The narrator repeats the word *visa* at line 32, when he asks the interpreter to explain whether the dream's images (*visa*) hold any meaning: "si quid habent veri, visa quid ista ferant."

55. See, for example, McKeown 2002, 122.

56. Ingleheart and Radice 2011, 58. They cite additional examples from love elegy in which turning pale accompanies news of a lover's infidelity.

57. Translation by Webb (2009, 94). For extensive discussion of *enargeia* in ancient rhetoric, see Webb 2009.

58. See, for example, Pseudo-Longinus, *On the Sublime* 15.8, on the difference between the poet's and the orator's sources for *phantasiai*.

59. Several studies have explored the use of color terms in Latin literature. See Edgeworth 1992 on Vergil; J. Clarke 2003 on Catullus, Propertius, and Horace; Bradley 2009 on color in ancient Rome.

60. Repeated use of the adjective *candidus* is prominent, for example, in Catullus 64, where it is juxtaposed more than once with the adjective *purpureus* to provide contrast

between light and dark. On color in Catullus 64, see O’Connell 1977; J. Clarke 2003, 57, 126–27, 129, 131; Elsner 2007c, 23.

61. See *OLD* s.v. *candidus* 1 and 2. See also J. Clarke 2003, 52–64, for a concordance of the adjective *candidus* in Catullus, Propertius, and Horace; Edgeworth 1992, 114–16, for a concordance of the adjective in Vergil’s *Aeneid*. Both discuss its range of meanings and connotations.

62. O’Connell (1977) makes a similar point about the use of color—in particular the prominent “clusters” of white and red/purple—in the ekphrasis of the wedding tapestry in Catullus 64.

63. See Gage 1993, 15, for a summary of ancient thought regarding the role of color in painting. See also Trimpi 1973, 26.

64. In antiquity there was ongoing philosophical debate about whether color was inherent to an object or was a secondary, subjective feature, whose perception varied among viewers. On this, see Bradley 2009, ch. 2.

65. Cf. Pliny, *HN* 35.29, for a discussion of color and pigment in painting, on which see Bradley 2009, 94–101.

66. Boyd 1997, ch. 3. Boyd follows Edwards 1991 (Cambridge commentary on *Iliad*, vol. 5), 24, in defining the extended (long) simile as consisting of “at least one entire clause.”

67. Boyd 1997, 108.

68. One exception is Penelope’s dream of the geese, interpreted within the dream and later, after the dream, by Odysseus (*Od.* 19.535–70). On this parallel, see Tronchet 1999.

69. Walde 2001, 319.

CHAPTER 2. FANTASY AND CREATIVITY IN TIBULLUS 1.5

1. See Gendre Loutsch and Jacobi 1997 for a cursory discussion of sleep and dreams in Tibullus, the *corpus Tib.*, and Propertius.

2. See Kennedy 1993, ch. 1, on reality as a construct in elegiac poetry, and esp. 17–18 on this poem.

3. P. A. Miller 2004, 104–5, has a comprehensive list of references to similar metaphorical uses of the term “dream” to suggest the inferior (Veyne 1988, 36) or “elusive” quality of Tibullus’s poetry (Kennedy 1993, 13). See also Wray 2003, 217–19. To Miller’s list I add Alfonsi (1945, 17), who writes of Tibullus’s “arte ondeggianti e fluttuante in molli sogni.”

4. Van Wageningen 1913.

5. Elder 1962, 82, 83–84.

6. Bright 1978, 132–33.

7. Lee 2008, 196.

8. See P. A. Miller 2004, 104–5, for a summary of these approaches, drawn from the history of scholarship on Tibullus.

9. See P. A. Miller 1999, 2004.

10. P. A. Miller 2004, 105.
11. *OED* s.v. “dream” n.² A1a.
12. Harris (2009, 15) lists first the “dreamer’s lack of control over what he/she attends to while dreaming” among his list of common characteristics of the dream, calling it “universal or nearly so.”
13. See *OLD* s.v. *votum* 2 and 3.
14. Putnam (1973, 98) uses the term “fancy” to describe the episode in his synopsis of the poem, but then uses the term “dream” a few pages later in the specific commentary on lines 21–22. Bright (1978, 113) uses “fantasy” and “dream” within the same paragraph in discussing 1.5.20–34, as does Murgatroyd ([1980] 2001, 167). Lee-Stecum (1998) uses “ideal” (164, 165) and “dreams” (168) to describe the vision, within a section whose heading is “Shattered Dreams” (163–68); Lee (2008, 209) uses “dream passage” to describe the episode, and writes that the poet is “dreaming.” P. A. Miller (2004) uses “dream” throughout his discussion of the passage in the Freudian sense of the word, with the meaning “unconscious wish.” A succinct example of the slippage comes in Grüner 2004, 266, where in consecutive sentences the author uses the terms “Traumbild” and “Wunschbild” to describe the passage in question.
15. Cf. *OLD* s.v. *somnium*.
16. Webb 2009, 88.
17. For a discussion of this passage, see Webb 2009, 95–96; for *phantasia* in general, see Sheppard 2014; Webb 2009, ch. 5; Manieri 1998, 17–96. Goldhill (2007, 2) uses the term “impression” to translate *phantasia*. “Visualization” is another apt term, also used by Goldhill, which translates Pseudo-Longinus’s term *eidolopoiein* (“image production”) in *On the Sublime* 15.1.
18. Translation modified from Webb 2009, 95.
19. Webb 2009, 105.
20. Representative comments on this contrast from different periods in and approaches to Tibullan criticism include Cairns 1979, 179; Kennedy 1993, 17–18; Lee-Stecum 1998, 164 (in the chapter on poem 1.5, whose title is “Real and Unreal”).
21. Cairns 1979, 181. See also Lee 2008, 208–11, on the relationship between chronological fluidity and subjectivity in the poem. Lee-Stecum (1998, 156 and *passim*) responds to Cairns’s desire to impose order onto the poem by claiming that the reader’s experience is characterized by a “struggle for control.”
22. P. A. Miller (2004, 101–2) comments on the contradiction between the image’s endurance and evanescence: “I.5’s dream of Delia as the mistress on Tibullus’s farm serving Messalla the finest fruits of their labor is admitted to be a fantasy, and yet it is one of the most powerful and lasting images of the poem.”
23. Putnam (1973 ad loc.) refers to “the poet’s imagined dream of the future, experienced while Delia was possibly suffering *saeva somnia* of her own.” Cf. Bright 1978, 160, for a similar comparison.
24. Grüner (2004, 266) distinguishes between thought and speech in this passage.
25. Putnam 1973 ad loc.

26. Cf. Catullus 70.3–4, where the narrator declares that the words of a woman spoken to her passionate lover “should be written on the wind and on the swift water” (“sed mulier cupido quod dicit amanti, / in vento et rapida scribere oportet aqua”).

27. See Copley 1956. See Lee-Stecum 1998, 165, for criticism of imposing the “structure” of the *paraclausithyron* on poem 1.5.

28. Maltby 2002 ad loc.

29. Bright 1978, 47.

30. Maltby (2002 ad loc.) compares this to other descriptions of epiphanies that use a form of *videre* in the active voice to describe the vision, such as Vergil, *Ecl.* 10.26 and Horace, *Carm.* 2.19.2. Tibullus’s passive *videar* brings this “epiphany” closer to a dream (cf. Illia’s use of *videbar* in Ennius, *Ann.* 1.40).

31. Van Nortwick (1990, 116) refers to this as “Messalla’s epiphanic entrance into the pastoral scene.” Salzman-Mitchell (2008, 39–40) discusses the use of the verb *venit* to indicate “visual appearance” in the context of Ovid, *Am.* 1.5, where Corinna appears to the narrator like an epiphany; see 40n23 for earlier observations along these lines.

32. Putnam (1973) observes *ad* 1.5.21 that “the future tense transfers us immediately into the dream.” See Lee 2008 for discussion of Tibullus’s use of subjunctive verbs in general.

33. Postgate (1913) 1962.

34. Bright 1978, 113–14.

35. Lee-Stecum 1998, 163–68.

36. P. A. Miller 2004, 127. Compare Bright 1978, 48, which reads Messalla as “an extension of Tibullus’ own longing for recognition by Delia.”

37. P. A. Miller 2004, 127.

38. *Inst.* 6.2.32. See my discussion in chapter 1.

39. Goldhill 2007, 6. Cf. Goldhill 1994 and 2001 on *phantasia*.

40. There is no evidence that the narrator shared this fantasy with Delia at the time as an enticement to stay faithful to him, as Shea (1998, 41) suggests. Rather, the shift to referring to her in the third person in the context of the fantasy indicates the opposite: cf. *te* (7) and *iaceres* (9), for example.

41. See *OLD* s.v. *finger* 1 and *TLL* I: 770.64–771.32 (Vollmer), *formare*, *plasmare*. See Rispoli 1988, 142–69, for a discussion of the Greek verb *πλάττειν*, which covers a semantic range similar to that of *finger*.

42. See *OLD* s.v. *finger* 8: “(also w. *sibi*, *animo*, or sim.) to form or convey a mental picture of, conjure up in the mind, visualize”; cf. *TLL* II: 775.30–776.49 (Vollmer), *animo*.

43. For discussion of madness in Tibullus, see Grüner 2004, 263–73.

44. Grüner 2004, 266–67.

45. Kennedy 1993, 17. See Lee 2008, 209; Lee-Stecum 1998, 164, for similar assessments.

46. *Aen.* 4.469–70.

47. Kennedy 1993, 17. Putnam (1973 ad loc.) refers to the repetition of the verb as “the bounds of the poet’s imagined dream.”

48. Ovid, *Met.* 1.43, e.g., uses the verb to describe Prometheus’s creation of man from a mixture of earth and water. The verb *formare* is used at *Met.* 1.364 with similar force to describe Deucalion’s wish to create men from earth. Cf. the parallel uses of *formare* and *ingere* in Ovid, *Am.* 3.7.63–64. Vergil uses the verb to refer to Vulcan fashioning in metal the likenesses of various conquered peoples in the procession before Augustus on Aeneas’s shield (*Aen.* 8.724–26).

49. Putnam 1973 ad loc.

50. See *OLD* s.v. *tingo* 9 and 10.

51. Putnam 1973 ad loc.

52. The image of the bee is meant to provide a contrast to Horace’s description of the epinician poet Pindar’s approach to poetry (mentioned in the preceding lines; cf. “Dircaemum cyncnum,” line 25), which is sweeping rather than selective.

53. Wray 2003. Wray’s article, a response to P. A. Miller 1999, offers an alternative to Miller’s dream hermeneutics as a way to understand language that is ambiguous and even seemingly contradictory in Tibullus’s poetry. Wray specifically suggests linguistic and philological scrutiny of the poet’s notoriously “difficult” language to uncover his engagement with etymology and self-conscious references to the poetry of his predecessors in the service of crafting a subtle declaration about poetic craft. For a summary of Wray’s response to Miller, see Oliensis 2009, 9.

54. Wray 2003, 235.

55. Wray 2003, esp. 233–41.

56. One component of Wray’s analysis (2003) of the semantics of *facilis* in poem 1.1 is an observation that Tibullus creates a false etymological connection between the adjectives *facilis* and *fictilis* in lines 37–40. The crux of Wray’s argument about the significance of *facilis* in Tibullus’s poetry is his explication (238–41) of the adjective at 1.1.40, where it is used to describe the material (*facili . . . luto*) that creates earthenware cups (*fictilia . . . pocula*, lines 39–40).

57. Maltby 2002 ad lines 19–20.

58. Whereas the word *somnium* alone is not used as a synonym for “fantasy,” the phrase *ingere somnia* is used in at least one other instance as a metaphor for creating something false. Cf. Lucretius, *DRN* 1.104–5, where *somniaingere* is a metaphor for creating terrifying false tales.

59. An exception to this is the observation of Koortbojian (1995, 103), discussed in chapter 5.

60. See Manieri 1998, 17–25, for discussion of the semantic evolution of the term *phantasia*.

61. See Webb 2009, 116, 116n29, for the reference to Diogenes Laertius 7.49, in which this distinction is made.

62. Webb 2009, 117.

63. Webb 2009, 119.

64. Webb 2009, 120: “For those with access to them, the visual arts were also a possible source of mental images.”

65. See Leach 1980b and also 1988, esp. 243–58.

66. La Rocca (2008, 77n156) questions the rigidity of Leach's division and includes references to subsequent criticism of her work.

67. See Leach 1988, ch. 4. Prominent examples of the sacral-idyllic vignette include those from the House of Augustus (room of the masks), the House of Livia (room of the landscapes), and the Villa Farnesina (cubiculum E) at Rome. The vignette style reached its apex in the red and black rooms from the villa at Boscotrecase, the latter of which features the sacral-idyllic vignette "floating" against a monochromatic background. For extensive discussion of the Boscotrecase paintings, see von Blanckenhagen and Alexander 1962.

68. See Leach 1988, 240–46; cf. Leach 1980b.

69. Leach 1980b, 69; cf. Leach 1988, 245, where she observes that background or landscape in both contexts is merely "implied."

70. Leach 1988, 217.

71. Leach 1988, 241.

72. Leach 1988, 242–43.

73. Peters (1963, 38) comments on the sketchiness of their detail and schematic appearance, also characteristic of a frieze. Both Leach (1988) and Ling (1991) use "frieze" to describe these paintings. Leach does not discuss them in connection with Tibullus; rather, she discusses them in her chapter on "architectural panoramas" and sees in them a parallel for the panoramic imagery of Horace's *Odes*.

74. See Rizzo 1936, 43–50, for a comprehensive study of the House of Livia frieze painting. For the date, see Peters 1963, 35, citing H. Beyen. The frieze has a close counterpart in the "panorama" paintings of corridors G and F from the Villa Farnesina at Rome.

75. La Rocca (2008, 39) suggests this when he observes, "Il fregio, pur interrotto dalle colonne, è pensato come continuo."

76. Leach 1988, 198.

77. Ling 1991, 149.

78. Peters (1963, 37) writes with regard to the House of Livia frieze: "Man and animal have been depicted with great skill: by accentuating light and shadow the various attitudes have been well-characterized. The human figures cannot here really be termed simply filling. The entire composition would fall to pieces if they were taken away." Leach (1988, 266) observes that a central difference between the vignette panels and the frieze is "its more frequent inclusion of human figures and actions."

79. Leach 1988, 262.

80. Rizzo 1936, 45.

81. Rizzo 1936, 48.

82. Leach 1988, 264. This feature, combined with the suggestion of continuity behind the columns, may have encouraged the viewer to walk around the room in a linear progression beginning at the door. See O'Sullivan 2007 on the function of the painted pillars on the frescoes known as the Odyssey landscapes. He suggests that this feature would have encouraged movement around the room, as though in a peristyle, thus emphasizing the viewer's engagement with the paintings in context.

83. Ling 1991, 142.

84. See, for example, the references in Propertius 1.2 and 1.3 and in Ovid, *Am.* 1.7 and 1.10. For discussion of exempla and similes in Ovid's *Amores*, with special attention to their visual qualities, see Boyd 1997, ch. 3. For explanation of the dearth of mythological exempla in Tibullus in contrast with its abundance in the work of other elegists, see Bright 1978, ch. 1. See Whitaker 1983, 65n1, for the history of criticism on myth in Tibullus.

85. Putnam 1973 ad loc.

86. Soubiran (1971, 69) takes it this way.

87. See Murgatroyd (1980) 2001 ad loc. for possible meanings of *caerulea*. K. F. Smith 1913 ad loc. gives several parallels for the adjective's use in reference to eyes.

88. Tibullus uses these colors in conjunction again at 1.7.12.

89. Bright 1978, 162.

90. Soubiran 1971, 69.

91. Sayce (2008, 45) calls this simile "active, rather than descriptive." She compares this with the "dynamic" similes of Homer and Vergil, which she defines earlier (9) as "conveying visual and acoustic phenomena, and actions and processes."

92. See Barringer 1994 for discussion of Nereids in Greek art. Although there is no evidence for the depiction of this particular moment in Thetis's story in Roman art, a passage from a later author suggests that her transport on the dolphin's back was a suitable image for painting and for conveying her unhappiness at her imminent marriage. In *Arg.* 1.130–33 Valerius Flaccus describes in an ekphrasis the paintings adorning the hull of the Argo as they are being painted. The first image he mentions is one of Thetis being transported on the back of a dolphin to the unwanted bridal chamber of Peleus: "Hic insperatos Tyrrheni tergoe piscis / Peleos in thalamos vehitur Thetis; aequora delphin / corripit, ipsa sedet deiecta in lumina palla" (lines 130–32). The use of the verb *corripit* suggests the dolphin's quick movement through the sea (see *OLD* s.v. *corripio* 2), in contrast with Thetis's stationary pose upon his back (*sedet*).

93. Elder 1962, 78. This is in keeping with his general assessment of Tibullus's use of imagery, about which he states (74) that the poet's "similes are direct and 'keep their feet on the ground.' His metaphors are neither blown-up nor drawn out; at no time do they seem to have run away with him so as to create within the poem a new little poetic world of their own. . . . They are intentionally limited, as if the poet feared that they might *get out of hand*" (my emphasis). Applying this last statement to the simile of Thetis gives it a dimension of irony when we consider that she herself gets out of Peleus's hands by her acts of shape-shifting, for which see Pindar, *Nem.* 4.62–65 and Ovid, *Met.* 11.242–45. Cf. the attitude of Whitaker (1983, 12), who writes of the simile that Tibullus "is not trying to achieve anything other by the reference to myth than the enhancement of, the creation of an ideal aura about, his mistress' beauty."

94. Murgatroyd (1980) 2001, 175 (ad loc.). Lee-Stecum (1998, 171) points out that Delia's power is suggested by the reference to the dolphin as *frenatus*, arguing that this may imply the poet's acknowledgment of Delia's power over him.

95. The notion that Thetis was taken to Peleus against her will goes back to Homer

(*Il.* book 18) and is a consistent feature of the story after this point. See n. 92 for the version of Valerius Flaccus (*Arg.* 1.130–33).

96. Mutschler 1985, 93n22.

97. See Lieberg 1986, 321.

98. The interpretation of *haec* in line 47 is in fact a subject of disagreement among critics. I follow Murgatroyd ([1980] 2001 ad loc.) and Maltby (2002 ad loc.), who take it as retrospective. See also Cairns 1979, 180, and Lee-Stecum 1998, 172. Those who take the phrase “*haec mihi nocuere*” as looking forward to the poet’s mention of the *dives amator* and the *lena* in the remainder of line 47 and 48 include K. F. Smith (1913 ad loc.); Vretska (1970, 310); and Bright (1978, 162).

CHAPTER 3. TRANSFORMING THE LOVER

1. The others are poems 3.3 and 4.7, discussed in different chapters.

2. I follow the *OCT* text of Barber 1960 for this poem. Barber divides poem 2.26 into two poems: 2.26a (lines 1–20) and 2.26b (lines 21–58, with an indication that lines are missing between 28 and 29). Fedeli (1984) 1994 prints 2.26 as one poem of 58 lines, while Goold 1990 divides the poem into three sections: 2.26A, B, and C. Heyworth 2007b prints 2.26a (lines 1–20) as an individual poem, leaves lines 21–28 as a fragment of 2.26, and prints lines 29–58 as 2.26b. For sensible and brief accounts of the poem’s thematic unity and structural disharmony, see Papanghelis 1987, 80–83; Newman 1997, 165. For arguments in favor of its unity, see Richardson 1977, 286; Wiggers 1980; Rambaux 2001, 152. For a recent discussion of poem 2.26a (treated as a single poem of twenty lines), see Flaschenriem 2010.

3. See, for example, Richardson 1977 ad 2.26.21.

4. For these terms, see Genette 1972, 227–62.

5. Von Blanckenhagen and Alexander 1990, 32–33; for the date of the painting, 3.

6. See von Blanckenhagen and Alexander 1990, 41.

7. Von Blanckenhagen and Alexander 1990, 31.

8. Von Blanckenhagen and Alexander 1990, 32.

9. See Valladares 2005 for the most recent discussion and a history of commentary on Propertius’s reference to visual art in this poem.

10. Lyne (1970, 61) suggests the dreamlike quality of the narrator’s interaction with the sleeping Cynthia when he describes the waking Cynthia at the poem’s end as “the woman of reality who inevitably reveals herself, and breaks in upon the eggshell world of dreams.”

11. Flaschenriem 2010, 193.

12. See Valladares 2005, 219–22; cf. Breed 2003; Elsner 2007c.

13. See most recently Heyworth 2007a, 222–23.

14. Propertius uses the participle *visum* as a substantive only three times in his entire corpus, and each time it is used to refer to either a dream or a work of visual art. In addition to its usage in 2.26a, Propertius uses *visa* to refer to the dreams that the poem’s narrator imagines Cynthia is experiencing while he gazes upon her asleep at 1.3.29. At 2.6.28, *visa* refers to the lewd paintings that corrupt the innocent girls who see them. In all three cases,

visa refers to images over which a viewer has no control, but which influence his or her emotional response.

15. M. Hubbard (1974, 19–20) and Fedeli (1980, 59–60) discuss the importance of Propertius's choice of *Cynthia* as the first word of his first poem, thus putting his own stamp on lines that otherwise echo those of Meleager, *Anth. Pal.* 12.101.1–4.

16. In fact, book 2 boasts only five poems that begin with active verbs. In four (2.1, 2.22a, 2.31, 2.33b, following Barber's [1960] divisions), the verb appears in the second person. Because of the problematic unity of book 2 and its multiple fragments, even this tally is debatable. For example, Fedeli (1984) 1994 begins poem 2.33b with the line "non audis et verba sinis mea ludere, cum iam" (line 23 of the longer poem 2.33), while Heyworth 2007b begins the poem with "lenta bibis: mediae nequeunt te frangere noctes" (line 25 of the longer poem 2.33). Poem 2.11, likely a fragment but usually printed as an individual elegy, begins with a third-person verb: "scribant de te alii vel sis ignota licebit." See Heyworth 2007a, 156–58, for discussion of the textual problems with this poem.

17. Boucher 1965, 62.

18. See, for example, Vergil, *Ecl.* 1.42, 10.26; Horace, *Carm.* 2.19.1–2.

19. Lyne and Morwood 1973, 45. In response to Lyne and Morwood, see Bramble 1973 on 3.10.

20. Cf. the use of *mirer* in 2.3.33, *mirabar* in 2.3.35, and *miremur* in 3.2.9.

21. Heyworth 2007a ad loc.

22. Cf. Platnauer 1951, 74.

23. The examples, in addition to the two in 1.13 (discussed above), are in 4.2.53, where Vertumnus speaks about witnessing the war between Rome and the Sabine forces, and in 4.5.61, where Acanthis vouches for the wilting of flowers in Paestum as a warning to young beauty. A few lines later (4.5.67), the verb is used to describe Acanthis's physical decrepitude, echoing his earlier declaration.

24. See Kenney (1958, 202) for a list of instances in the didactic poetry of Lucretius, Vergil, Ovid (*Ars Am.*, *Rem. Am.*). Cf. Cicero, *Flac.* 53, where he uses *vidi ego* followed twice by *vidi* in anaphora. Among the elegists, Tibullus uses the phrase *vidi ego* only once, at 1.2.89 (line 91 in Putnam's edition), and *vidi* once at 1.4.33, both examples "used to illustrate a general statement or maxim" (Murgatroyd [1980] 2001 ad loc.). Ovid, however, uses the phrase *vidi ego* four times in his *Amores*, manipulating (and parodying) its familiar didactic function to suit his own needs. His direct allusion to Vergil's usage at *Am.* 2.12.25, for example, underscores the importance of this phrase as a marker of a narrator's authority in didactic poetry. For discussion of this passage in the context of "extended similes" in Ovid's *Amores*, see Boyd 1997, 93.

25. The relevant passages are *G.* 1.193–97 (two examples), 1.316–18, 1.472. In the cases of 1.193 and 1.197, the use of *vidi* reminds the reader of the speaker's authority as a teacher, in addition to helping to convince the reader of the information presented about the failure of seeds and the subsequent *sententia* (lines 199–203) about the degeneration of all things. At 1.316–18, the combination of the words "saepe ego . . . vidi," Thomas observes, "imparts *fides*," noting that this is one of only two instances of the pronoun *ego* in the didactic parts

of the poem (1988 ad loc.). Contrast the use of *saepe videmus* at *G.* 2.32, where Vergil uses the combination to describe the grafting of different plants, many of which the author would have known were impossible: “the device, whose main function is to impart *fides*, is employed at a moment when *diffidentia* is most likely to be provoked” (Thomas 1988 ad loc.).

26. Thomas 1988, 101.

27. See, for example, Goold 1990.

28. Löfstedt 1933, 55.

29. See Löfstedt 1933, 55–59, for discussion of the phrase *in somnis* in 2.26a and elsewhere in Latin literature to distinguish between “in dreams” (*in somnis*) and “in sleep” (*in somno*). In his commentary on *Aeneid* 2.270, Nicholas Horsfall (2008) observes that Vergil uses the phrase *in somnis* to connote “the [light] sleep in which a dream occurs,” trying to reconcile the primary and intended meanings of the noun’s number.

30. Austin 1971, 129.

31. See, for example, the first two dreams of the *Aeneid*, discussed in chapter 1: Sychaeus visits Dido (“ipsa sed in somnis inhumati venit imago / coniugis ora modis attollens pallida miris,” 1.353–54) and Hector visits Aeneas (“in somnis, ecce, ante oculos maestissimus Hector / visus adesse mihi largosque effundere fletus,” 2.270–71). The simile of the dream that illustrates Turnus’s futile fighting (*Aen.* 12.908–12) is an exception (“velut in somnis . . . videmur”) to this usage.

32. Aeneas’s dream vision of Hector in *Aen.* 2.268–97 is an example of the apparent mutation of a familiar figure in a dream. After describing Hector’s mutilated body, as we recall, Aeneas exclaims with surprise: “ei mihi, qualis erat, quantum mutatus ab illo / Hectore qui redit exuvias indutus Achilli / vel Danaum Phrygios iaculatus puppibus ignis!” (lines 274–76). Walde (2001, 273n35) links the mode of description through comparison (*qualis*) in both dreams.

33. See Frontisi-Ducroux 2003, ch. 1, on a connection between sea creatures and the metamorphic quality of the sea; for contrast, Forbes Irving (1990, 173–74) points out that “shape-shifting” is rarely used to describe the sea itself, and Poseidon, unlike his brother Zeus, for example, does not engage in metamorphosis. Newman (1997, 140–41) suggests the influence of Etruscan tomb painting upon Propertius’s depiction of the sea. See Vial 2010, 131–65, on water as an element essential for metamorphosis in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*.

34. For the etiology of the dolphin as a transformed human, see the Homeric Hymn to Dionysus, where the ship’s crew who had attempted to abduct the shape-shifting god were transformed into dolphins as they jumped overboard to escape him. See Ridgway 1970 on dolphins in Greek art, especially as metamorphic creatures. See also Stebbins 1927 for an overview of dolphins in the art and literature of Greece and Rome.

35. Flaschenriem (2010, 193) contrasts the “dream Cynthia” in her moment of confession with the Cynthia “presented elsewhere as a practiced manipulator of the truth, as an able maker of fictions in her own right.”

36. Walde (2001, 241) observes the poet’s aggression toward Cynthia on display here; Flaschenriem (2010, 193) sees this as the poet-lover’s attempt to “control the record” of their affair.

37. Parker 1992b, 94.
38. Flaschenriem 2010, 193, 193n14, citing Lilja 1965, 119–32, on female attributes typically praised by the elegists.
39. For discussion of this poem, see Greene 2000; P. A. Miller 2004, ch. 5.
40. See von Glinski 2012 for discussion of the parallels between simile and metamorphosis in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.
41. Walde 2001, 240.
42. *Teque* is a conjecture for the MSS reading *atque*. I follow the emendation to *teque* in the texts of Fedeli (1984) 1994; Goold 1990; Heyworth 2007b.
43. See, for example, Wyke 1987, 1989, and 2002, chs. 1 and 2.
44. Flaschenriem 2010, 192–93.
45. Flaschenriem 2010, 195.
46. In his *Argonautica*, Apollonius of Rhodes calls the Hellespont κοῦρης Ἀθαμαντίδος αἰπὰ ῥέεθρα (“the dangerous stream of Athamas’s daughter”) at 1.927 (although at 1.935 he uses the term Ἐλλήσποντον). At *Her.* 18.137, Ovid refers to the Hellespont as “Athamantidos aequora”; at *Met.* 11.195, he refers to the “angustum (citra) pontum Nepheleidos Helles” (but cf. *Met.* 13.407: “longus Hellespontus”). The genitive phrases, especially those with the patronymics, imply that the Hellespont, in addition to receiving its name from Helle, was still associated with the girl herself.
47. This image may reflect a version of Helle’s story in which her death is explained as a “marriage” to Poseidon. At *Fast.* 3.873–74, Ovid describes Phrixus’s reaction to Helle’s demise: “flebat, ut amissa gemini consorte pericli, / caeruleo iunctam nescius esse deo.” Propertius uses the phrase *caeruleus deus* to refer to Neptune at elegy 3.7.62.
48. Flaschenriem 2010, 197.
49. Hopkinson (2000, 41–42) discusses Glaucus in the works of earlier authors. None are extant, so it is impossible to tell which influenced Ovid, but Glaucus’s transformation seems to have been a common feature.
50. Herodotus 1.22–24.
51. The other example is in poem 2.24c.40, where it is the main verb of its sentence.
52. Flaschenriem 2010, 199; cf. Holleman 1970, 179–80. Walde (2001, 240) calls the dolphin a “*piscis ex machina*” with a function similar to that of the golden ram who rescued Phrixus and Helle.
53. See Lefevre 1966, 43; Wiggers 1980, 123; Walde 2001, 240–41. Quinn (1963, 194) observes a “realistic, everyday note” in this scene, an element that contrasts with the otherwise elevated tone suggested by the reference to mythology.
54. Flaschenriem 2010, 191, 191n6. At 192 she writes, “In the course of explicating his dream, the narrator imposes order on it, organizing its constituent features on familiar aesthetic principles. He turns nightmare into a species of ecphrasis.” This comment also suggests a detachment often associated with Hellenistic epigram, for example.
55. Keyssner (1938) 1975, 280–81. Cf. Boucher 1965, 41–64, on the influence of visual art on Propertius’s visual style (see 62 for brief mention of poem 2.26a). See Valladares

2005, 209–12, for a summary of the arguments of Keyssner and Boucher regarding Propertius's visual style and the influence of the material culture of the Augustan period.

56. Camps 1966a ad loc.

57. M. Hubbard 1974, 167. D. A. West ([1975–76] 1990) makes a similar case for Vergil's use of color to suggest the techniques and effects of actual visual art in the ekphrasis of the shield of Aeneas in *Aen.* 8.

58. Wiggers 1980, 123.

59. These observations are echoed by Walde 2001, 241; Flaschenriem 2010, 192.

60. See Barringer 1994 on representations of the Nereids in Greek art. See Icard-Gianolio and Szabados 1992, 785–824, for discussion of both Greek and Roman examples.

61. Cf. Pindar, *Nem.* 5.7, where the Nereids are described as golden: ἀπὸ χρυσεῶν Νηρηίδων.

62. Von Blanckenhagen and Alexander 1990, 30.

63. Theocritus (*Id.* 7.59) describes the Nereids as blue-green: γλαυκαῖς Νηρηίδεσσιν.

64. As discussed in chapter 2, recalling Delia's physical charms in poem 1.5, including her *flavis comis* ("golden hair"), leads Tibullus to compare her to Thetis, who is called *Nereis caerulea Thetis* (lines 44–46). Tibullus's contrast between the adjectives *flavis* and *caerulea* is comparable to that between *candida* and *caerulea* in Propertius's poem 2.26a.

65. For instances in which words meaning green or blue-green are used to describe the Nereids, see Ovid, *Her.* 5.57 (*virides Nereidas*); Horace, *Carm.* 3.28.10 (*viridis Nereidum comas*).

66. J. Clarke (2003, 48) suggests that both *candida* and *caerulea* are associated with the sea.

67. On these precedents, see Thomas 1982.

68. I follow Thomson 1998 for reading *incanuit* over *incanduit*.

69. Dufallo 2013, 43.

70. Cf. the similar description of the whirlpool in line 14: "candenti e gurgite."

71. See Baker 2000 ad loc. Pliny, *HN* 35.50, 97, discusses the artist's use of a limited color palette and a clear veneer that allowed his colors to appear with more clarity.

72. Text and translation after Babbitt 1927.

73. M. Hubbard 1974, 164–69.

74. M. Hubbard 1974, 167. See Barbet and Miniero 1999 on the excavation of the villa and its decorative program.

75. One mosaic from about 150 CE shows Nereids (and others) attending the passage of Phrixus and Helle upon their ram. See Icard-Gianolio and Szabados 1992, 818, and plate 465.

76. M. Hubbard 1974, 168.

77. M. Hubbard 1974, 167: "The elements of this picture derive from representations of the drowning Helle, of which Propertius has kept the central figure and the background, while deleting her brother Phrixus and demoting the ram with the golden fleece."

78. For extensive treatment of these pairings, especially in the Stabiae mosaics, see Lavagne and Wattel de Croizant 1984. On the nymphaeum mosaics from the Villa San

Marco in context, see Wattel de Croizant 1999, 85–93. For photographs of the two mosaics juxtaposed, see Barbet and Miniero 1999, v. 1, plate 3.

79. Keyssner (1938) 1975, 281.

80. A painting from the House of M. Lucretius (IX.3.5) in Pompeii seems to show a very similar composition, although it is in poor condition and thus difficult to read (see *LIMC* 1994, v. 7.1, 401, and v. 7.2, plate 29). The dynamic between brother and sister on display in these wall paintings is also evident in a slightly later account of the story, which deserves brief mention here. In *Fast.* 3.849–76 (23 March), Ovid recounts the story of Phrixus and Helle to mark the passing of the sun into the sign of Aries. Although the tale's ostensible purpose is to explain the ram's catasterism, Ovid gives unprecedented attention to Helle's accidental drowning and Phrixus's attempt to save her, describing Phrixus's reaction: "paene simul periit, dum vult succurrere lapsae / frater, et extentas porrigit usque manus" (lines 871–72).

81. Rimell 2006, 186, 202–3.

82. Goold 1990, 179.

83. For a comprehensive introduction to Musaeus's poem and the influence of earlier Greek literature, see Gelzer 1975, 297–331.

84. Papanghelis 1987, 103–10.

85. Rimell 2006, 184.

86. For detailed discussions of the sleeping Ariadne in Roman wall painting, see McNally 1985; Fredrick 1995. See Valladares 2005 for discussion of the Ariadne paintings in conjunction with Propertius 1.3. See Elsner 2007c for a discussion of Ariadne in poetry and wall painting.

87. This composition, with slight variations, is common. Some examples are preserved only in drawings; others are extant in various states of preservation. For a good selection, see the plates for Elsner 2007c. Gallo 1988 has a more comprehensive collection of images of the abandoned Ariadne.

88. Fredrick 1995, 272.

89. These houses are the Casa del Gallo and Casa dei Vettii. The paintings from the Casa del Gallo were destroyed, so we must rely upon drawings. For drawings, see *Pompei: Pitture e Mosaici*, 10 vols. (Rome: Istituto della Enciclopedia italiana, 1998), vol. 8, 563–65.

90. Elsner 2007c, 31.

91. Elsner 2007c, 31.

92. Elsner 2007c, 31.

93. Flaschenriem 2010, 192.

94. Boucher 1965, 63.

95. Valladares 2005, 222–23.

96. Brilliant's (1984, 65) translation of Schefold 1962 (*Vergessenes Pompeij*), 186. On pendant painting, see Brilliant 1984, 53–75; Leach 1988, 361–408; Ling 1991, 135–41; Bergmann 1994; 1996. See Feldherr 2010, 276–92, for a recent application of Bergmann's ideas about painting to the mythological imagery of Ovid, *Met.* book 2.

97. Leach 1988, 364.

98. Bergmann 1994, 245. This line of thinking is expanded in Bergmann's essay on the paintings of tragic heroines in the House of Jason: Bergmann 1996, esp. 207–8.

CHAPTER 4. THE VISUAL DREAMSCAPE
OF PROPERTIUS 3.3

This chapter is a revision of Scioli 2011–12.

1. See Richardson 1977, 318–30, for a convincing presentation of 3.1–3.3 as a tripartite introduction to book 3 that points out parallels between the three poems. The name “Philetas,” for example, appears in 3.1.1 and 3.3.52 (the last line of the poem) as a signal of the boundaries of Propertius's programmatic declaration. Harmon (1979) considers poem 3.3 the midpoint of a five-poem cycle (3.1–5). He suggests (317) that we interpret 3.3 as occurring “prior in time” to the events related in the surrounding poems. Walde (2001, 244) claims that because 3.3 is not the first poem in book 3, its programmatic impact is diminished.

2. The relevant passages: Hesiod, *Theog.* 1–34; Callimachus, *Aet.* prologue and reference in *Ant. Pal.* 7.42.1; Ennius, *Ann.* book 1, fragments 1–3, 9 (Skutsch 1985). Other related passages include Lucretius, *DRN* 1.117–26; Ovid, *Am.* 1.1, 3.1. See Heyworth and Morwood 2011, 112–15, for detailed discussion of these precedents. Kambylis 1965 is a comparative study of the theme of poetic initiation in Hesiod, Callimachus, Ennius, and Propertius, with a particular concentration on the function of water as a symbol in these episodes. See also Hunter 2006, ch. 1, for the importance of the sacred grove for the initiation of these poets.

3. For the *recusatio* connected to poetic initiation in Latin poetry, see Horace, *Sat.* 1.10; Vergil, *Ecl.* 6. Cf. also Propertius's earlier *recusatio* in 2.10.

4. The relief is traditionally dated to the late third century BCE based on identification of portraits of Ptolemy IV and his wife in the faces of Chronos and Oikoumene (bottom register, far left). Others place the date about a century later (ca. 125 BCE) based on epigraphic analysis. For more on the dating of the work, see Newby 2007, 172.

5. Mau (1882) developed the classification system of four styles of Roman wall painting. Beyen (1938) revised it to include two phases of the Second Style: early (ca. 80–40 BCE) and late/transitional (ca. 40–15 BCE). The connection between the advent of elegiac poetry and the changes in wall-painting styles witnessed by the Augustan age is explored by Andreas Grüner (2004).

6. For an ancient Roman perspective on this aspect of dreaming, see Lucretius, *DRN* 4.760–64. He claims that sleep fetters the dreamer's senses, thus forcing the dreamer to believe that he is actually seeing people who are in reality dead; this blockage prevents the senses from distinguishing between reality and fiction.

7. Boucher 1965, 62, referring to Rothstein 1920–24.

8. M. Hubbard 1974, 164; see 165 for poem 3.3.

9. Walde 2001, 244, where she also uses the terms “szenischen Gestaltung” and “artistisch” to describe the scene.

10. J. Clarke 2003, 221.
11. See my discussion of this formula in chapter 1.
12. For comprehensive discussion of the dream, see Skutsch 1985, 147–67, esp. 150–53 for citations of ancient testimonia.
13. “Tityre, tu patulae recubans sub tegmine fagi / silvestrem tenui Musam meditaris avena; / nos patriae finis et dulcia linquimus arva. / nos patriam fugimus; tu, Tityre, lentus in umbra / formosam resonare doces Amaryllida silvas” (Vergil, *Ecl.* 1.1–5).
14. Baker 2000 ad loc.
15. This is underscored by the fact that there are no more first-person verbs in the rest of the poem with the exception of the aside (*ut*) *reor* (line 38), discussed further below.
16. See Casali 2009, 324n54.
17. Goold 1990, 227. See also Skutsch 1985, 552–53, for further discussion.
18. Goold 1990, 227. J. F. Miller (2009, 313–14) refers to this geography as “a Greek fantasy land—now Helicon (1), now Parnassus (13 *Castalia*).”
19. For discussion of this statue type, see R. R. R. Smith 1991, 65; Schneider 1999, 168–74.
20. See Platt 2011, ch. 6, on the overlapping of cult images and dream images of the gods in her discussion of epiphany dreams in the Second Sophistic.
21. For recent discussion of this phenomenon, see Harris 2009, 57–61; Platt 2011, 260–66.
22. See *Oneirocritica* 2.35, 2.39. Cf. Aelius Aristides, *Sacred Tales* 48.41. See Elsner 1996b on these passages. For discussion of statues of gods in dreams, see also Brillante 1988, 17–33; Harris 2009, 38–39, 61–62.
23. For a detailed discussion of the role of vision in this poem and what follows (often presented as a separate poem, 2.32), see T. K. Hubbard 1984; see also Laird 1996; Bowditch 2009.
24. T. K. Hubbard (1984, 291) calls this statue of Apollo “an object of the audience’s subjective judgment.” Camps (1966a) ad loc. suggests that this phrase describes the viewer’s perception that the statue was “looking more beautiful even than the beholder had conceived Apollo to be.”
25. Camps 1966a ad loc.
26. This is comparable to the wording of poem 3.9.9, in which Propertius describes the sculpture of Lysippus as *animosa signa*. Propertius seems to allude here to the series of Hellenistic epigrams celebrating Myron’s lifelike sculpture of a cow. The fact that the poet has multiplied the number of cows is perhaps humorous.
27. T. K. Hubbard (1984, 289) writes, “Not only is there tension between each noun and its modifier, but even the word-order is carefully crafted to juxtapose the terms of nature and those of art.”
28. Laird 1996, 85. This echoes T. K. Hubbard (1984, 288), who writes, “In fact there is absolutely no explicit reference in this couplet to the statue as a statue: the statue itself manifests itself as the true living presence of the god.”

29. T. K. Hubbard (1984, 288) attributes this “progression of authenticity” to the movement in the poem from outside the temple to its interior. Hubbard suggests that the cult statue of Apollo “comes to life” because of its context within the sanctuary for his worship, beside statues of his family, and surrounded by images associated with his mythology, such as the story of Niobe and her children.

30. M. Hubbard (1974, 79) notes that “scene replaces scene rapidly and completely, and an air of inconsequence is convincingly created.” The lack of connection between the images certainly encourages our interpretation of them as the illogical and insubstantial creations of a dreaming mind. The dream is merely an image that flees as the dreamer wakes up, although the image may leave an indelible impression upon the dreamer’s mind, as this poem does upon the reader’s.

31. I will use “grotto” to translate *spelunca* instead of “cave” in order to distinguish between a natural, unadorned space (cave) and a space, perhaps originally a natural cave, that has artificial elements, adornments, or enhancements (grotto).

32. Line 27 contains the sole use of the noun *spelunca* in Propertius’s poetry, whereas *antrum* appears numerous times. Even though the terms are both used simply to refer to caves elsewhere, Propertius’s use of the less-common *spelunca* here could signify a conscious decision to refer to this cave’s special status.

33. See, for example, Walde 2001, 246, and additional comments on 247–48. See also the earlier treatments of Luck 1957; Harmon 1979; Joly 1983.

34. M. Hubbard 1974, 79–80.

35. Lavagne 1988, 396–97. See also Joly 1983 for discussion of Roman mosaic techniques in connection with this poem.

36. See Weinberg 1986, chs. 1–4, for caves in literature; Ustinova 2009 for caves in Greek literature; Lavagne 1988 for a comprehensive study of caves in ancient art and literature. For the possible influence of the poet Gallus on the themes of initiation and the cave in this poem and elsewhere in Propertius, see Cairns 2007, 126–40.

37. See Lavagne 1988, 381–95, on Republican examples of *operosa antra*, such as the nymphaeum at Cicero’s villa at Formiae, which used pumice, shells, and pebbles as decoration in a precursor to mosaic technique. See Grimal 1984, 138–60, for a survey of the decorations of gardens in Rome during the Julio-Claudian period, and 303–18 for discussion of grottoes in Roman gardens.

38. Harmon (1979, 328–29) sees a moralizing irony in the contrast between the two caves, with Propertius contrasting the “pretenses” of the “wealthy intelligentsia” with the true *ingenium* of the poet. Lavagne (1988, 500–501) disagrees with this assessment.

39. Lavagne 1988, 397.

40. Other examples include the Claudian grotto at Baiae (Punta del Epitaffio) and the grotto at Nero’s Domus Aurea. For detailed presentation of all of these, see Lavagne 1988, 515–88.

41. On Tiberius’s grotto at Sperlonga, see Lavagne 1988, 515–58; for its decorative program, see Säflund 1972.

42. Segal 1969, 417.

43. Propertius receives the instruction to write elegy in the manner and setting (respectively) of Ennius and Hesiod, poets who wrote in hexameter as opposed to elegiac verse. Fedeli (1985, 119–22, 142) comments on the overlap of elegiac and epic markers in the poem: namely, in lines 3–12, epic subject matter is given such prominence, yet is described in elegiac couplets. He draws attention to this confluence again in his discussion of the connection between the *lacus Gorgoneus* and the Hippocrene, arguing that the water that the doves drink has its source in the Hippocrene because of the mythological origin of Pegasus from the blood of the Gorgon Medusa. He sees in this relationship a metaphor for the derivation of elegiac meter from the hexameter and for the levels of diction in each type of poetry. Camps (1966b, 67) and Richardson (1977, 328) also remark upon the connection between the two water sources. Admitting that Propertius’s “dream lacks geographical precision,” Heyworth (2007a, 291) observes that “there is one stream, and the contrast lies in the form of the water, and also in the epithets” (*magnis* . . . *fontibus* versus “a pool calm enough to be a drinking trough for doves”). He sees a pejorative reference to horse’s urine in “Bellerophonti umor equi” (line 2).

44. M. Hubbard 1974, 80.

45. The representation of birds drinking was a popular motif in mosaic and fresco. The Tivoli mosaic is thought to imitate the scene at the center of a mosaic on the same subject by Sosos of Pergamon. Pliny the Elder (*HN* 36.184) remarks upon the ability of Sosos to create the illusion of shadow in his mosaic work.

46. See McDonald and Pinto 1995, 164. For discussion of this mosaic in connection with the image of the doves drinking in poem 3.3, see Guillemain 1940, 107. Herter 1976 discusses specifically the iconographic symbolism of the dove in connection with Propertius’s description.

47. For a catalogue and discussion of freestanding sculpted Muses from Miletus and other parts of the Greek and Roman world, see Schneider 1999.

48. *OLD*, s.v. *texo* 3 (“to put together or construct (writings or other mental products)”). *Lego* carries the familiar meaning of “read” (*OLD*, s.v. *lego* 8, 9), while *apto* (*OLD*, s.v. *apto* 5, “to form or modify so as to suit, adapt, accommodate, fit”) is used by Ovid (*Am.* 2.4.44), for example, to refer to his ability to make tales from mythology relevant to his current love affairs.

49. The Muses’ occupations in their cave are similar to those Cynthia claimed kept her busy in poem 1.3, as she waited in vain for her lover to return after a night of drinking: “nam modo purpureo fallebam stamine somnum, / rursus et Orpheae carmine, fessa, lyrae; / interdum leviter mecum deserta querebar / externo longas saepe in amore moras” (lines 41–44). If, as Walde suggests (2001, 244), Propertius uses poem 3.3 as a vehicle for announcing that Cynthia has been replaced by the Muses as his source for poetic inspiration, then the similarity between these passages represents a physical transfer of duty from one party to the other. Cf. also the Naiads weaving in their cave at *Od.* 13.96–112.

50. Richardson 1977, 329.

51. See Pliny the Elder, *HN* 36.34.

52. This room is traditionally called a cubiculum (in the studies by Lehmann and Ling, for example). Given its location off the peristyle, the room may have served another purpose, however. Perhaps it was a triclinium, or a room that served multiple functions, as was often the case with rooms traditionally labeled cubiculum or triclinium. See Riggsby 1997 for the multiple functions of cubacula. See also Wallace-Hadrill 1994, 52–57.

53. Lavagne 1988, 500, on Boucher 1965, 62, 184 (cf. note 7 above).

54. Grimal (1984, ch. 7) discusses the depiction of gardens, including caves, in Roman art. A well-preserved example of a painted natural cave appears in room 11 of the villa at Oplontis. For the paintings in this room, see de Franciscis 1975; J. R. Clarke 1991, 119–23.

55. The paintings at Boscoreale belong to the first phase of the Second Style.

56. Lehmann 1953, 134. See also Leach 1982 for discussion of the Boscoreale paintings. Also helpful are Borda 1958, 30–38; Bergmann 2010.

57. Rooms 14 and 15 of the villa at Oplontis also contain fine examples of Second Style painting in this style. See de Franciscis 1975 and J. R. Clarke 1991 for the wall paintings of this villa. Room M at Boscoreale is unusually ornate, but the quality and subject matter of the Second Style rooms at the villa at Oplontis furnish proof that this kind of elaborate decoration was not unique.

58. As Lehmann (1953, 6) writes in describing the decoration of the villa, “The Second Pompeian style was at its height. Illusionism was its keynote. Walls were no longer conceived as structural members whose function of enclosure and support demanded decorative expression.” For discussion of the shift between reality and simulation characteristic of the Second Style, with particular attention to the images of this room, see Bryson 1990, 37–41.

59. The villa at Oplontis contains many rooms painted in the Second Style that also feature this type of symmetry.

60. See Lehmann 1953, plate 11.

61. See Ling 1991, 31, fig. 27.

62. See Lehmann 1953, 116–18 and n. 141, for the originality of the window in the room’s design.

63. Staunchly rejecting the theories that the architectural panels reflected either stage decoration or the palaces of Hellenistic kings, Lehmann (1953, ch. 3) concludes that the structures represented are meant to evoke the *pars urbana* of a country villa, which would have included porticoes, rustic sanctuaries, and storage buildings. Kuttner (1998) and Ling (1991, 30–31) leave open the possibility that the “windows” created by these elaborate paintings “looked out” onto settings that could not have been physically contiguous and may have drawn upon diverse sources.

64. If the room was used for dining, the grotto wall would have been behind the host, and would thus have been in a prominent position for viewing by the guests.

65. Lehmann 1953, 118. Bryson (1990, 56–57) echoes this sentiment in his discussion of the objects depicted in the Boscoreale room that effect a “shift or threshold” in the degree of reality or representation in a depiction. He cites as an example the passage of the viewer’s eye from the “natural-seeming” grotto to the “sophisticated” townscape via a bowl of fruit

(*xenia*) in the center of the rear wall that serves as a “threshold.” See Bergmann 2002 for the viewer’s experience of the juxtaposition of live gardens and artificial depictions of nature in the villa at Oplontis.

66. Bergmann 2010, 32.

67. See Moormann 1988, 92, for identification of this statue as Hecate.

68. Lehmann 1953, 130–31.

69. Kuttner 1998, 106. Kuttner’s description of the townscape, which makes it sound somewhat wild and rustic in its precarious stacking, also reminds us of its “larger than life” quality, in Ling’s (1991, 31) term. From the suggestion of the few buildings perched here, perhaps the viewer is meant to imagine the expanse of a city beyond. This type of extrapolation from a hint is also, according to Aristotle, a feature of the dream experience. In section 463a3 of his *De Divinatione per Somnum*, Aristotle claims that in sleep slight movements seem to be big (καὶ γὰρ αἱ μικραὶ [κινήσεις] μεγάλα δοκοῦσιν εἶναι). Here he refers to the senses other than vision: people who hear faint echoes, for example, translate these into thunder and lightning in their dreams.

70. Lucretius (*DRN* 4.453–61) comments on this paradox at some length, contrasting the fettering of sleep with the movement experienced in dreams. In particular, he refers to the contrast between the sleeper’s confined physical space and his seeming ability to travel: “conclusoque loco caelum, mare, flumina, montis / mutare et campos pedibus transire videmur,” lines 458–49. The dreamer believes that what he sees in his dream is reality at the time he experiences it, and it is only upon waking that he establishes the difference between what he has seen in a dream and what he sees in reality. Perhaps viewing the vistas of the room at Boscoreale would have fostered this type of paradoxical experience: seeming to depart from the space while simultaneously being confined by it. See Cicero, *Acad.* 2.51–52 for similar sentiments.

71. Lucretius, *DRN* 3.1060–67. Kuttner (1998, 106) mentions this passage in conjunction with the images from the Boscoreale room in her conclusion about the mixing of urban and rural motifs in the paintings of the Second Style. Kuttner is convinced that the prominence of architectural motifs on the walls of a country villa served to unite the public/private, city/country allegiances of the villa’s owner. In her critique of Lehmann 1953, Leach (1982, 146) describes that work’s response to the established theory that Second Style wall paintings reflected motifs from stage decoration: Lehmann “argues instead that the scenes are illusionary views of the grounds of a Roman villa, a villa not unlike this Boscoreale residence yet somewhat grander in keeping with the owner’s *dream* of what an ideal villa might be” (my emphasis). Leach’s word choice is telling: according to Lehmann, the villa owner’s dream is, of course, not literal; rather, “dream” refers to his desire to collect all of the elements of his imagined ideal villa into one room, as though a single room’s perspective could offer a view of all of the desired components of a villa complex. Regardless of what the buildings actually represent, a dream offers a solution to what is an impossible ambition.

72. It is worth noting that this is mentioned just after a reference to dreams (lines 1047–48). As Lucretius has it, the person leading an unfulfilled life, one out of step with the

principles of Epicureanism, might as well be asleep and dreaming, since he is unconscious of the cause of his depression and inability to be content.

73. The architectural vistas cover more of the wall's surface area, but the rustic grotto scene is the focal point of the room, as it lies on axis with the room's entryway, as discussed above.

74. Kuttner (1998, 106–7 and *passim*) argues that the design was arranged to reflect the owner's self-identification as a “builder”—hence the combination of elements from public and private architecture.

75. Pinkwart (1965b, 89) briefly mentions Propertius 3.3 in connection with the iconography of the Archelaos relief. She notes, for example, the absence of Zeus and Mnemosyne from Propertius's dreamscape.

76. Newby 2007.

77. This is the traditional interpretation of the relief, exemplified by Pollitt 1986, among other works. Newby (2007) questions the grounds for this interpretation.

78. See, for example, the discussions in Pollitt 1986, 16; R. R. R. Smith 1991, 187.

79. Newby 2007, 160.

80. Newby 2007, 162.

81. Newby 2007, 163.

82. Newby (2007, 165) writes, “While that landscape represents the divine sphere, here [in the bottom register] we seem to be in a human realm, yet the divine and human spheres are also linked by the figure of the poet in the register above, who forms the bridge between the two.”

83. Newby 2007, 161.

84. Lieshout (1980, 12) refers to a dream in which “there is a visit by the dreamer (his soul) to some person or object” as “active” or “ecstatic.”

85. I borrow the term “dream poetics” from Lev Kenaan 2004.

CHAPTER 5. SLEEPER'S DREAM/VIEWER'S IMAGE

1. Compare the dreams of Anna Perenna later in book 3 and Numa in book 4. See Walde 2001, 328–35, on all of the dreams of the *Fasti*.

2. Connors 1994, 110n31; cf. Newlands 1995, ch. 5, on Lucretia.

3. Newlands 1995, 146–47.

4. As Newlands (1995, 147) observes.

5. Other treatments of the story of Mars and Rhea Silvia include Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Ant. Rom.* 1.77.1; Plutarch, *Rom.* 2–6.

6. See lines 819–20 (“illa diu reticet . . .”). Newlands (1995, 148) notes that Lucretia's silence here contrasts with her eloquence in Livy.

7. For specific reference to the Rhea Silvia passage, see Andreoni Fontecedro 1991, 7–8; Krevans 1993; Connors 1994, 107–8; Boyd 1997, 217.

8. Merli 2000, 53–56 and *passim*; cf. Andreoni Fontecedro 1991; Newlands 1995, 217; Barchiesi 1997, 62–67.

9. Merli 2000, 51; cf. Walde 2001, 219–28, 332–35, on differences between Ennius’s and Ovid’s dreamers. Cf. Connors 1994 on the relationship between Ennius’s Ilia and Ovid’s Ilia in *Am.* 3.6.

10. Because of the fragmentary nature of Ennius’s text, we do not know what followed Ilia’s speech. See Scioli 2010 for a discussion of Ilia’s dream in connection with others dreamed by female characters in Latin epic, in which the dreamer uses the dream as a mode for communicating with a sibling (usually a sister).

11. See Connors 1994, 111–12; Boyd 1997, 211–19, on *Am.* 3.6. See Cairns 1979, 64–86; Ball 1983, 185–217, on Tibullus 2.5. Ovid also makes oblique reference to Ilia’s transgression in conceiving the twins in *Am.* 3.4, on which see Connors 1994, 111–12; Boyd 1997, 215n24.

12. As discussed in chapter 3, the bibliography on this poem is extensive; for recent representative treatments that place emphasis on the role of visual art, see Tatham 2000; Breed 2003; Valladares 2005.

13. Merli 2000, 42n11. Sorabella (2010, 7) also mentions the poems in conjunction, but without further elaboration.

14. Valladares (2005) discusses the viewer’s “enthralment” with the sleeper in poem 1.3.

15. The use of *ocellis* in the elegies of Propertius and in Ovid’s *Amores* is discussed in detail by Merli (2000, 42–44).

16. This line is also comparable to *Am.* 3.5.1: “Nox erat, et somnus lassos submisit ocellos.”

17. Many have noted Cynthia’s transformation from sleeping to waking, silent to verbal, compliant to shrewish as a central feature of the poem’s structure. See, for example, Lyne 1970.

18. Richard Heinze (1919) was one of the first to address the issue of genre in the *Fasti*; Merli (2000) revisited the issue in her reappraisal of Heinze’s work. Hinds (1987) makes an important contribution to the discussion of genre in the *Fasti* as part of his “new approach” to elegy and epic in the work. Of Heinze’s interpretation and its revision by Little (1970), Hinds (1987, 117) writes: “Thus in the *Fasti*, where this universal interest in genre manifests itself with unusual explicitness, any tendencies which *can* be read as elegiac *will* be read as elegiac, whatever other, non-generic lines of interpretation they may admit too.” Holzberg (2002, 174) writes: “Indeed, in his role as commentator on the calendar, Ovid repeatedly emphasizes that he continues to feel bound by the elegiac ‘value system’ that by definition rules out interference in matters of state.” Alessandro Barchiesi (1997, 66) has claimed that Ovid’s *Fasti* is the heir to Latin epic and elegy.

19. Hinds 1992, 82.

20. Newlands (1995) has pointed out that the poem’s narrator, Ovid, frequently defers to another authority in relaying its subject matter.

21. See Hinds 1987, especially chs. 5 and 6, for detailed discussion of the epic-elegiac spectrum in the *Fasti* when considered in conjunction with the *Metamorphoses*. Newlands (1995, 55–57) and J. F. Miller (1991, 21–29, esp. 23–24) discuss the relationship between the announcement in this proem and Ovid’s relationship to his previous work.

22. See Pasco-Pranger 2006, 9: “It is this book [Propertius’s book 4] that comes the closest in conception to Ovid’s *Fasti*.” Cf. Welch 2005, 12.
23. See P. A. Miller 2004, ch. 7.
24. On this aspect, see Welch 2005, ch. 3.
25. P. A. Miller 2004, 187–88.
26. Hinds 1987, 127.
27. Holzberg 2002, 162–63, with additional discussion of the encounter with Minerva (lines 675–94).
28. Holzberg 2002, 162; the extended discussion on 161–67 is relevant to this matter. The seminal discussion of the disarmed Mars in the *Fasti* is Hinds 1992.
29. Richard J. King (2006, 58), for example, writes of “Ovid’s eroticized divine inspiration in the prefaces of March and June.” Boyd (1997, 218) says, “No longer is Mars simply a part of the rhetorical ornamentation of Ovidian elegy . . . ; rather, he now *is* Ovidian elegy.”
30. The classic example of this comes in Ovid *Am.* 1.9 (“militat omnis amans”). On this poem, see Boyd 1997, 160–63; on the role of Mars in the *Fasti* as compared with this earlier poem, see 218. See Hinds 1992, 92, on the paradoxical theme of *militia amoris*, a standard feature of love elegy, which also applies here. Cf. Merli 2000, 38–39.
31. Barchiesi 1997, 62.
32. Boyd 1997, 218.
33. Barchiesi 1997, 62.
34. The proper name also appears in the ablative in the prepositional phrase “cum Marte” (in line 3).
35. This connection is suggested by Hinds (1992, 93), who states that “this Mars, ‘captured’ by a woman (3.9–10: *te . . . / cepit*), evidently has as much right as anyone to enter an elegiac world.” See also Ursini 2008 ad loc.
36. This may recall Rhea Silvia’s role as the object of the narrator’s gaze in Tibullus 2.51–52 (“te quoque iam video Marti placitura sacerdos / Ilia”), a passage that establishes a precedent for the disarming of Mars in his encounter with her (discussed above). See Barchiesi 1997, 62–63; Merli 2000, 44–47.
37. Herber (1994, 428) calls the *videt-visam* pair the most successful example of the “active-passive concatenation” in the *Fasti*.
38. Salzman-Mitchell 2008, 44–45. See also Huntingford 1981, 110; Kennedy 2008.
39. Boyd 2006, 172. Cf. W. Iser’s (1980) discussion of “narrative flow.”
40. See Ursini 2008 ad loc.
41. See Merli 2000, 45, for discussion of the fallen fillet in connection with the *vittas iacentes* of Tibullus 2.5.53 and other mentions of the fillet in connection with Rhea Silvia’s chastity.
42. Murgatroyd 2005, 19.
43. Koortbojian (1995, 103–5) first used the term *enargeia* to describe the effects of Rhea Silvia’s dream description.
44. Cf. *Am.* 3.5.10, where the narrator uses *ecce* to signal the appearance of the cow in his dream, and Vergil, *Aen.* 2.270–71, where Aeneas exclaims at the appearance of Hector:

“in somnis, ecce, ante oculos maestissimus Hector / visus adesse mihi largosque effundere fletus.”

45. See Ursini 2008 ad loc. for citation of this instance and other uses of *quis nescit* to introduce information assumed to be well known.

46. Ovid refers to Rhea Silvia’s marriage to the Anio in *Am.* 3.6.45–82. See also Horace, *Carm.* 1.2.17–20, for marriage to the Tiber.

47. See Ursini 2008 ad loc. for the narrative “uselessness” of this information, since Rhea Silvia will not be returning home with the water. Cf. Kenney 2002, 53, for other instances of this type of narration (which he called “‘footnoting’ parentheses”) in the *Fasti*.

48. Jones 2005, 67–69. She makes a similar point (64–67 and ch. 7) about the Tiber’s role as a type of narrator in book 8 of Vergil’s *Aeneid*. See also Boyd 2006, esp. 199–203, on rivers as narrators in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*.

49. See Skutsch 1985, 194; Krevans 1993; Goldberg 1995, 101.

50. On sleeping figures in Roman art, see Fredrick 1995; Koortbojian 1995; McNally 1985; Sorabella 2010. For a survey extending beyond Greece and Rome, see Pötzsch 1993.

51. For catalogues of images depicting the pair, see Alföldi 1950, 2–13; Aichholzer 1983, 68–76; Albertson 2012. Our earliest examples are on gems from the late Republican period (late second century BCE). See, e.g., Albertson 1987, fig. 9.

52. For mentions of visual art in literary studies, see, for example, Heinze 1919, 25; Andreoni Fontecedro 1991, 19–21. Merli (2000) relegates discussion of influences of visual art on Ovid’s version of the story to a footnote (50n24), as does Connors (1994, 104n14, 108n23). Pietrangeli (1943) notes iconographic connections between Ovid’s text and a later mosaic. See also Albertson 1987; Gersht and Mucznik 1988; Holliday 2005, 99–102, for discussions of the extant representations of the pair in visual art. Albertson 2012, ch. 2, provides an overview of the development of the literary and visual traditions during the late Republican and early Augustan periods.

53. Koortbojian 1995, esp. 102–6.

54. Koortbojian 1995, 103. Sorabella (2010) explores similar ideas about the desire of the external viewer to know the dream of a sleeping figure.

55. Koortbojian 1995, 105.

56. See Albertson 1987, 455–58; 2012, 52–54.

57. See Brilliant 1984 for a basic discussion of the types of narrative in Roman visual art. See Dawson 1944, 103–4, on reading the painting as a “continuous narrative.” For more on this painting, see Marconi 1929; Elia 1932, 84; Cappelli and Carandini 2000, 167.

58. Disagreeing with earlier critics, Swan (2001, 69) argues for reading the images below the sleeping Rhea Silvia as a projection of her prophetic dream: an interesting interpretation but difficult to support, since there is so little evidence for the representation of dreams in Roman art.

59. Borda 1959, 10. See also Holliday 2005.

60. Scholars cite this image as evidence that in the pre-Augustan period, narratives in which Rhea Silvia was raped during sleep competed with ones in which she was awake. See Dawson 1944, 169; Albertson 1987, 457.

61. Brilliant 1984, 30. Dawson (1944, 195) calls the paintings “juxtaposition without connection of successive episodes in the story” and “narrative without continuity.”

62. See Brilliant 1984, 28–30, for discussion and illustration of one panel; see also Borda 1959, 8–9. For comprehensive discussion of the Basilica Aemilia reliefs, see Carettoni 1961.

63. For a plan of the paintings within the columbarium, see Holliday 2005, fig. 3.

64. Holliday 2005, 99.

65. Borda 1959, 7.

66. Andreae in Helbig⁴ 1963–72, 461–64.

67. Holliday 2005, 101.

68. Holliday 2005, 104.

69. Others include the late Roman Igel monument at Trier (on which see Zahn 1974; Albertson 2012, 110–11) and a Hadrianic-period mosaic from Ostia, about which I will say more below.

70. See Albertson 2012 for discussion of all known snapshot types.

71. For the early excavation of Ostia and that of the mosaic, see Fea 1802; Paschetto 1912. For formal documentation, see Becatti 1961. See also Pietrangeli 1943 for interpretation.

72. Pietrangeli 1943, 5.

73. These jagged lines create an additional boundary to the scene, as they meet up at almost a right angle to the horizontal line running across the bottom of the image parallel to Rhea Silvia's sleeping body. Becatti (1961, 37) interprets the vertical lines as streams of water flowing from the base of the tree and mingling with the water from the jug. Pietrangeli (1943, 7) suggests that they might be shadows cast by the branches of the tree, and that the line toward the right from the smaller tree may represent its shadow. If this is the case, then the shadows of the trees work in concert to delineate even more boldly the space enclosing Rhea Silvia as she sleeps. For representations of shadows in black and white mosaics in Ostia, see Dunbabin 1999, 63, fig. 61. If, as Pietrangeli surmises, the white patch in the middle of the vertical lines represents the trees' reflections in a pool, then we must imagine that the water that has poured from the jug has flowed in two directions, thereby creating a small moat on two sides of the sleeper. Whether we read the lines as shadows or as streams of water, their presence creates the illusion of depth in the flat plane of the image. No one has suggested an interpretation for the horizontal line at the bottom of the image. Perhaps it represents the bank of the river from which Rhea Silvia has filled her jug. If so, it creates a physical boundary for her space and indicates that her body occupies the farthest safe point in the physical enclosure.

74. Becatti 1961, 36. J. R. Clarke (1979, 77) calls this composition a “pyramidal container” for Mars's figure.

75. See McNally 1985 and Sorabella 2007, 225–27, for discussion of this gesture as a convention for depicting sleeping figures. Cf. the depiction of Rhea Silvia on the late-Roman altar known as the Ara Casali (see Maynial 1903, pl. 4).

76. Mastai (1975, 37) calls the “unswept floor” mosaic “the oldest extant example of *trompe l'oeil*.” The companion to this mosaic, the “doves on a bowl” mosaic discussed in

chapter 4, is similarly illusionistic, as it paradoxically captures the rippling movement of the water in the bowl as one dove takes a drink (see Pliny, *HN* 36.184).

77. J. R. Clarke 1979, 105.

78. J. R. Clarke 1979, 78.

79. J. R. Clarke 1979, 21.

80. Pietrangeli 1943, 7. In this case it would function like the personification of the river in the fresco in the columbarium of the Statilii.

81. See Dunbabin 1999, 269–78, on mosaic workshops. Albertson (2012, 91n27) refers to specific examples of nymphs reclining on water jugs in visual art.

82. Sorabella (2010) traces the role of the sleep watcher in Greco-Roman art and in various media. She adapts the concept of the “sleepwatcher” from Steinberg’s (1972) essay on Pablo Picasso.

83. On the connection with Ovid’s earlier love poetry, see Raval 2001.

84. Newlands 1995, 170, looking specifically at *Met.* 9.515–16, where Byblis comments that writing the letter is a response to being unable to express herself in speech.

85. Newlands 1995, 171.

86. Uncertainty about the twins’ parentage is a common feature of Rhea Silvia’s story. As I have noted, Livy 1.3–4 hints at the ambiguity that surrounded their conception when he states that she may have invented the story of Mars’s paternity to cover up her guilt (*culpa*). Dionysius of Halicarnassus (1.77) claims that stories circulated that their father was actually a suitor or Amulius disguised as Mars.

87. Koortbojian 1995, 104–5.

88. Compare Ennius’s dream vision of Homer in *Ann.* 1.3 (“visus Homerus adesse poeta”), where Homer explains the transmigration of his soul into Ennius’s body. I discuss this fragment in chapter 1.

89. Connors 1994, 105–6, 112. Cf. Dominik 1993, 42.

90. Connors 1994, 108.

91. For discussion of this topic, see P. Johnson 2008, ch. 1, on Ovid’s self-identification with the roles of the artists in the *Metamorphoses*; Sharrock 1991 on connections between Ovid the love elegist and Pygmalion the sculptor; Hardie 2002, 173–93.

CONCLUSION

1. Breton 1924 offers a definition of Surrealism that refers to dreams: “Surrealism is based on the belief in the superior reality of certain forms of previously neglected associations, in the omnipotence of dream, in the disinterested play of thought” (*Manifestoes of Surrealism*, 26). The analogy persists: for example, in the title of a 2010 exhibition on Surrealism at the Vancouver Art Gallery called “The Colour of My Dreams.”

2. Text and translation from Ambuel 2007. For discussion, see Lieshout 1980, 116–18.

3. For analysis of the passage in context, see Rosen 1983; Ambuel 2007.

4. Von Glinski (2012, 156) defines a simile as a “verbal image.”

Bibliography

ABBREVIATIONS

- LIMC *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* (Zurich and Munich, 1981–99)
OED *Oxford English Dictionary*
OLD *Oxford Latin Dictionary*
TLL *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*

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* Unless otherwise noted, I have used the following editions of the Latin texts discussed most frequently. For all other citations of Latin and Greek, I have used the *Oxford Classical Text*, unless otherwise noted. All translations are my own, except where indicated. I have used the standards of the *American Journal of Archaeology* for abbreviations of journal titles and the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* for abbreviations of the titles of primary sources in the bibliography and note citations.

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